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THE LIFE AND TIMES
OF
LORD EDWARD FITZGERALD

BY
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I think your project for the publication of an Irish Library is in every sense well worthy of the cordial support of every true Irishman.

Ireland's history contains many thrilling chapters in which the romantic, the picturesque, and the poetical elements have a part, which, it is not too much to say, are not less worthy of study and admiration than are the components of any other history in ancient or modern times. Ireland has struggled during many successive centuries to maintain her nationality, in spite of all the continuous efforts made by the conquering race to extinguish it, and thus to convert the real Ireland into a sham Britain.

I feel quite sure that the great majority of intelligent readers in England, Scotland, and Wales will welcome and appreciate the volumes which tell them the true story of Ireland.

Justin M. C. Carthy.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

May 20th, 1909.

DEAR SIRs,

I am much obliged for your promptitude in sending me the volumes of the "Irish Library." The idea of the Library is excellent, the volumes are admirably turned out, and the subjects are well chosen and admirably treated. I feel certain that the wide circulation of these little books amongst our people at home and abroad will do much to familiarise them with the main facts of Irish history, and that their cheapness will secure for them a ready sale. Publications such as these, which recall the leading men and events in Ireland's heroic fight for freedom, are a valuable aid in the preservation of that spirit of devotion to the motherland, and of self-sacrificing unity amongst themselves which is essential to the success of the cause.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) JOSEPH DEVLIN.

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AN APPEAL TO IRISHMEN AND IRISHWOMEN.

I AM making this personal appeal to my fellow-countrymen, as rumour has reached my ears that the Publisher of "THE IRISH LIBRARY" cannot possibly have much sympathy with Ireland or the Irish because of the fact that he is not Irish himself. I find it necessary to contradict that rumour. I *am* Irish, and my family on both sides is Irish. The Ouseleys of Galway and Limerick made history in their time for both counties, whilst the Carters of Queen's County have done the same thing for Maryborough and district.

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"'The Irish Library, issued in monthly volumes by John Ouseley, Ltd., Farringdon Street, London, E.C. Vol. I., 'The Life and Times of Robert Emmet.' To the student of history, who wants an unbiassed, dispassionate account of the times of Emmet the book will be equally welcome in so far as historical accuracy has been the chief aim of the compilers."—*Kildare Observer*.

Mr. Pat. O'Brien, M.P., writing from the House of Commons, says: "I read it ('Robert Emmet') with very great interest and pleasure, and I sincerely wish it the far and wide circulation it richly deserves, especially amongst the young Irish generation."

Mr. Justin McCarthy writes again:—

"I have received with much pleasure the second volume of the Irish Library, and I have already begun the reading of this deeply interesting account of the Fenian movement. I hope and trust that it may find readers all over the civilized world, for the true story of that Fenian movement has not yet found as attentive and impartial an audience as it ought to have, and is believed by large numbers of otherwise fair-minded and intelligent persons to have been nothing better than a meaningless outbreak of discontent and turbulence."

"Messrs. Ouseley have laid hold of a most excellent idea—namely, the publication of an Irish Library, consisting of twelve monthly parts, at the very moderate price of sixpence each. The volumes are historical, and range from the Life and Times of Robert Emmet to Irish Soldiers in the British Army. Regarding the project, the eminent Irish historian, Mr.

Justin McCarthy, in a letter to the publishers, says :—‘ Your project is in every sense well worthy of the cordial support of every true Irishman. Ireland’s history contains many thrilling chapters in which the romantic, the picturesque, and the political elements have a part, which it is not too much to say are not less worthy of study and admiration than are the components of any other history in ancient or modern times.’

“ The first volume, ‘ The Life and Times of Robert Emmet,’ has just been published. It is bound in neat style and with a very handsome design on the cover bearing the coat of arms of the four provinces—Ulster, Leinster, Munster, and Connaught—and is printed in beautiful clear type on antique paper.

“ The first chapter deals with the early life of Robert Emmet. He was born in Dublin in the year 1778. He was educated at Oswald’s School, in Dopping Court—a rather celebrated school in those days—and later he entered Trinity College at the age of fifteen years. The following chapters will no doubt be followed with interest, as they tell of the vivid and startling adventures through which Emmet passed, and also of the people with whom he associated. The last chapter describes his trial and execution. The trial lasted thirteen hours—hours of mental anxiety—during which period he had no interval of repose nor any refreshments. On the day of his execution he showed no signs of fear—in fact, he even assisted in adjusting the rope round his neck. His last words were :—‘ My friends, I die in peace, with sentiments of universal love and kindness towards all men.’ Students of old Irish literature should not fail to obtain a copy of ‘ The Life and Times of Robert Emmet,’ and also a copy of those volumes to follow.”—*Ulster Guardian*.

“ ‘ The Irish Library.’ No. 1. Robert Emmet. (London : John Ouseley, Ltd. Price 6d.) ‘ The Irish Library,’ as announced by the publishers, is to consist of twelve volumes dealing with events and with men that stand out prominently in the history of Ireland ; the volumes are to be issued monthly. If all are equal in merit to that with which the series begins—‘ The Life and Times of Robert Emmet’—they will furnish interesting and instructive reading to Irishmen, young and old. Emmet’s character is studied carefully and impartially, his qualifications for the perilous task he undertook estimated without bias, and the incidents of the insurrection of 1803 narrated calmly and dispassionately. Irish history written in this vein will form a profitable study for our rising generation. It will teach them not merely to know the events of their country’s history, but to estimate critically their significance ; and this is the only way in which the story of the past can be made to yield useful lessons for the future.”—*New Ireland Review*.

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“ We have received the first two volumes of ‘ The Irish Library,’ published by John Ouseley, Ltd., London, at sixpence per volume. The first volume deals with the ‘ Life and Times of Robert Emmet,’ and is a sympathetic chronicle of the high-souled young patriot’s career from his school-days to the last tragic scene in Thomas Street. The narrative follows Dr. Madden’s record pretty closely, and as a natural result contains nothing that will be new to Irish readers of the ‘ Lives and Times of the United Irishmen.’ But as a handy, cheap, and well printed account of Emmet and his plans, the book deserves to be welcomed, and will doubtless command a large sale.

"The second volume deals with 'The Fenian Movement,' and is as good a popular account of that great revolution and upheaval as has yet been published. Of course, the full history of the movement has yet to be written, when the materials left by Stephens, O'Leary, and others of the leaders can be utilised; but until such time arrives a narrative such as this, which without any pretentiousness or sensationalism, gives a clear and concise account of the movements, principal leaders, and events can do nothing but good. A very full account of 'The Manchester Rescue,' which originally appeared in the *Irish World*, from the pen of Edward O'Meagher Condon, is given at the end of the volume, which, like its predecessors, is well printed on what we are informed is Irish paper. Both volumes contain an appreciative introduction, written by Mr. Justin McCarthy."—*Sinn Féin*.

"'The Fenian Movement,' by F. L. Crilly (London: John Ouseley, Ltd., Farringdon Street—6d.).—This volume, the second of a series, 'The Irish Library,' gives an account of the Fenian Movement which bulked so largely in the fifties and sixties of last century. A large amount of interesting matter is brought together here by a writer evidently sympathetic with the Nationalist standpoint, for he puts on his title page as a sub-title 'The Story of the Manchester Martyrs.' The account of this incident, however, only forms the concluding chapters of a very full description of the rise and growth of Fenianism, as a phase of the Separatist movement."—*Aberdeen Free Press*.

"'The Fenian Movement,' by F. L. Crilly. (London: John Ouseley, Ltd.) 6d.—The volume on the Fenian movement, with special attention given to the story of the Manchester Martyrs, forms volume two of the Irish Library, and is sure to be welcomed by Irish readers, and by many English too. The story is too well known to need any extended reference here, but we may add that Mr. Crilly has done his work well and has been good enough to give some most interesting photographs. The volume will repay perusal, and will find numerous friends."—*Catholic Times*.

"Mr. John Ouseley's 'Irish Library,' in sixpenny volumes, is an enterprise that bids fair to be very successful. The books are well produced as to type and paper, in the familiar format of the sixpenny novel. The first two volumes deal with the 'Life and Times of Robert Emmet,' a narrative compiled from authoritative sources, and 'The Fenian Movement,' by Mr. F. L. Crilly. The first has a frontispiece portrait of that veteran worker in Irish politics, Mr. Justin McCarthy, who writes a letter commending the 'Irish Library' to the cordial support of his countrymen, and to Englishmen also who desire a fair presentment of Ireland's case. Mr. Crilly's book, on a subject he has made his own, is illustrated with some interesting photographs, reproducing the 'hue and cry' poster offering £1,000 for Stephens's re-arrest after his escape from gaol in Dublin, the scene at Manchester when Kelly and Deasey were rescued from the prison-van, and a number of portraits. The story is well written, stirring and exciting. The third volume of the series will deal with 'St. Patrick and the Saints of Ireland,' and others will follow until the books number twelve in all."—*Monitor and New Era*.

"'The Irish in America.' By Patrick Higgins and F. V. Conolly. (London: John Ouseley). 6d.—It is no small praise to say of this, the fourth volume of the Irish Library, that it is as instructive, as interesting, as attractive as any of the preceding volumes of this excellent series. In the space of a hundred pages we learn all about the exiles from Ireland who, since the early days of religious and political persecution in their own country, have fled across the ocean to find or make a home for themselves in the West. The soldiers and statesmen, orators and poets, business men and Churchmen who have wrought out a name and fame for themselves, all are remembered and mentioned with affection as shedding lustre on their Irish birth. To Irishmen the little volume will have a charm peculiarly

pleasing ; for it tells of the deeds of their kith and kin in far-off lands where liberty was not denied. To English readers it will bring long thoughts, and lead them to ask why these splendid men should have been lost to us. Most of us know the true answer now, and deeply regret it. Perhaps in time we shall undo the evil, and Ireland will once more flourish as a garden. For America's gain has been Ireland's loss. "Whatever may have been the individual success of the famine-driven emigrants," say the authors, and their immediate followers, their loss to Ireland cannot be otherwise than disastrous. Every country needs the strongest arm and the brightest intellects of its people in time of storm and distress, and to be denuded of these forces at such a critical moment in its history was to leave Ireland an easy prey to the vultures of the famine period. The bone and sinew departed, and none but the old and decrepit were left behind.' Of the reasons for this exodus much might be said, but the consequences are with us. 'Whatever may have been the exact reasons, there can be no doubt that Ireland was in 1804 capable of providing handsomely for a population of 8,000,000 of people, while to-day there is nothing but discontent raging among her 4,000,000. Her workhouses are full, her lands are lying derelict, her towns and villages are deserted, and instead of vigour and activity there is an atmosphere of carelessness and instability pervading the character and actions of her inhabitants. There is a disposition to leave too much to chance and to the prospects of an occasional dollar or two from relatives in the United States. Circumstances that create conditions like these cannot be too strongly condemned." But the emigrant is coming home again, with accumulated wealth and sharpened wits, and, given freedom and Home Rule, there is no reason why Irishmen should not be as successful in Ireland as this volume shows them to have been and still to be in America. It is a volume which we recommend to all our readers, Irish or English, for a perusal of it makes easier a just understanding of Ireland's misfortunes and of England's duty. We hope the volume will have a wide and rapid circulation."—*Catholic Times*.

" 'The Irish in America.' By Patrick Higgins and F. V. Conolly. No. 4 of 'The Irish Library,' the attractive series of sixpenny volumes illustrative of Irish life and history which is so deservedly popular. It presents a most readable account of the Irish in America. The authors have done their best to steer clear of party politics, and the book may therefore be commended to all who would have a succinct narrative of Patrick's doings overseas. London. John Ouseley, Ltd. 96 pp. 6d."—*Dundee Advertiser*.

" 'Daniel O'Connell and his Day.' (London: John Ouseley. 6d.) Introduced with a fine portrait of the great Liberator, this life of O'Connell, compiled from Luby's well-known work, is an admirable instalment in the Irish Library Series. No words of ours are needed to recommend this life of Daniel O'Connell and his times. History witnesses what he did for Ireland and her people, and he is sure of his niche in the temple of fame. As the introduction says: 'Throughout the whole of his long career, Daniel O'Connell, the marvellous and instructive story of whose active and varied life we are about to narrate, was manifestly actuated by a strong conviction of the truth of the principles which he endeavoured to enunciate. Setting aside for the present all his lesser aims, this illustrious Irishman, from the beginning to the end of his public life, kept three grand objects constantly in view:—First, he desired to emancipate his co-religionists of the Catholic Faith, and also the dissenting Protestants, from the civil disabilities that oppressed and degraded them; in other words, he sought to win religious liberty for the vast majority of Irish people, and even for the minority of the English and Scotch. Second, he aimed at uniting Irishmen of all races and religions into one strong nation. But, third, his greatest and noblest ambition was to regain the legislative independence of his country—to make Ireland a free nation once again." Amid what trials and dangers those efforts were pursued the reader learns in this admirable book, which Irishmen everywhere will welcome, as being the life of their greatest political leader. The print and paper are good, and we wish the volume a wide and increasing circulation.—*Catholic Times*.

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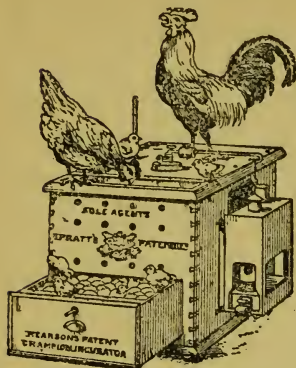
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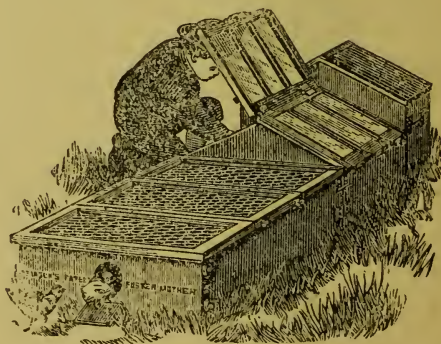
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INTRODUCTION

THERE is, perhaps, no name, in the ranks of the Irish peerage, that has been so frequently and prominently connected with the political destinies of Ireland as that of the illustrious race to which the subject of the following memoir belonged ; nor would it be too much to say that, in the annals of the Geraldines alone—in the immediate consequences of the first landing of Maurice Fitzgerald in 1170—the fierce struggles, through so many centuries, of the Desmonds and Kildares, by turns instruments and rebels to the cause of English ascendancy—and, lastly, in the awful events connected with the death of Lord Edward Fitzgerald in 1798—a complete history of the fatal policy of England towards Ireland, through a lapse of more than six centuries, may be found epitomized and illustrated.

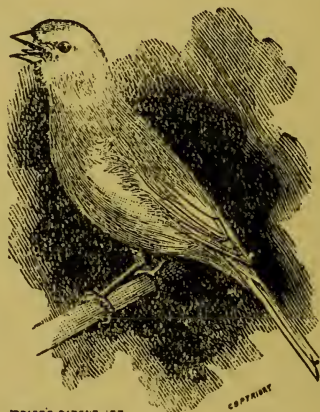
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The Life and Times of Lord Edward Fitzgerald



CHAPTER I

OF the first Duke of Leinster, who, in the year 1747, married Emilia Mary, daughter of Charles, Duke of Richmond, the subject of these pages, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, was the fifth son, being born on the 15th of October, 1763. In the year 1773, the Duke of Leinster died, and not long after, Lord Edward's mother became the wife of William Ogilvie, Esq., a gentleman of an ancient family in Scotland, being the representative of the first holder, of that name, of the baronies of Milltoun and Achoynanie.

Soon after their marriage, Mr Ogilvie and the Duchess of Leinster removed, with the greater part of her Grace's family, to France; and the Duke of Richmond having lent them his house at Aubigny, they resided for some time at that ancient seat. The care of the little Edward's education, which had, before their departure from Ireland, been in-

trusted chiefly to a private tutor of the name of Lynch, was now taken by Mr Ogilvie into his own hands; and, as the youth was, from the first, intended for the military profession, to the studies connected with that pursuit his preceptor principally directed his attention. Luckily, the tastes of the young learner coincided with the destiny marked out for him; and, in all that related to the science of Military Construction—the laying out of camps, fortification, &c.—he was early a student and proficient.

In the year 1779, the whole family left Aubigny for England, where, soon after, the young Edward made his first experiment of a military life in the Sussex militia, of which his uncle, the Duke of Richmond, was Colonel. It was not long before he became a special favourite of the Duke; and the knowledge he had acquired abroad in the art of castra-

metation had now, young as he was, an opportunity of displaying itself. An encampment being about to be formed for the regiment, and those intrusted with the task of pitching the tents having proved themselves wholly ignorant of the matter, Lord Edward, with the permission of his uncle, undertook to be their instructor, and performed his part in this extemporaneous architecture with so much adroitness as to excite general surprise.

Pleased, however, as he was with this preliminary step to soldiiership, it was not likely long to satisfy the ambition of a youth who, as appears from all his letters, was burning with impatience to be employed on some of those fields of active service which the hostile relations of England had now opened in almost every quarter of the world. A lieutenancy was accordingly procured for him in the 96th regiment of foot; and in the autumn of 1780 he joined his regiment in Ireland, uncertain, as yet, and, of course, anxious as to its ultimate destination.

In the Army List for 1782, Lord Edward's exchange from his first regiment into the 19th is set down as having taken place September 20th, 1780.

It was not till the latter end of March 1781, as appears by a letter dated from on board the London transport, that he set sail for his place of destination. He had been staying, for some days previous to embarking, at Lord Shannon's seat at Castle Martyr, and was, as the letter announces, to sail from thence

in the course of three hours, for the purpose of joining the other transports waiting at Cork.

At the beginning of June, Lord Edward's regiment, and the two others that sailed with it from Cork, landed at Charlestown. Their arrival at this crisis was an event most seasonable for the relief of the English forces acting in that quarter, who were, by the late turn of the campaign, placed in a situation of great difficulty. The corps under Lord Rawdon's command at Charlestown having been found hardly sufficient for the defence of that capital, he was unable, with any degree of safety, to detach from his already inadequate force such aid as, in more than one point, the perilous state of the province required. Post after post had fallen into the hands of the Americans, and the important fort called "Ninety-Six," which had been for some time invested by General Greene, was now also on the point of being lost for want of those succours which the straitened means of Lord Rawdon prevented him from affording.

In this juncture the three regiments from Ireland arrived and gave an entirely new aspect to the face of affairs. Though destined originally to join Lord Cornwallis, they were, with a prompt sense of the exigencies of the moment, placed, by the officer who had the command of them, at the disposal of Lord Rawdon, and thus enabled his lordship, not only to relieve the garrison

of Ninety-Six, but also to follow up this impression with a degree of energy and confidence of which even his enterprising gallantry would have been without such aid incapable. It was, indeed, supposed that the American general was not a little influenced in his movements by the intelligence which he had received, that the newly arrived troops were "particularly full of ardour for an opportunity of signalising themselves."

That Lord Edward was among these impatient candidates for distinction can little be doubted; and it was but a short time after their joining he had the good fortune to achieve a service which was not only brilliant but useful, and brought him both honour and reward. The 19th regiment, being posted in the neighbourhood of a place called Monk's Corner, found itself menaced, one morning at day-break, with an attack from Colonel Lee, one of the ablest and most enterprising of the American partisans. This officer having made some demonstrations at the head of his cavalry, in front of the 19th, the colonel of that regiment (ignorant, as it appears, of the nature of American warfare), ordered a retreat; a movement wholly unnecessary, and rendered still more discreditable by the unmilitary manner in which it was effected; all the baggage, sick, medicines, and paymasters' chests being left in the rear of the column of march, where they were liable to be captured by any

half-dozen stragglers. Fortunately, Lord Edward was upon the rear-guard, covering the retreat of the regiment, and by the firm and determined countenance of his little party and their animated fire, kept the American corps in check till he was able to break up a small wooden bridge over a creek which separated him from his pursuers, and which could not be crossed by the enemy without making a long detour. Having secured safety so far, Lord Edward reported the state of affairs to the colonel; and, the disreputable panic being thus put an end to, the regiment resumed its original position.

Major Doyle, afterwards General Sir John Doyle, was, at this time, at the head of Lord Rawdon's staff, and to him, acting as adjutant-general, the official report of the whole affair was made. Without delay he submitted it to his noble chief, who was so pleased with this readiness of resource in so young an officer, that he desired Major Doyle to write instantly to Lord Edward in his name, and offer him the situation of aide-de-camp on his staff.

This appointment was, in every respect, fortunate for the young soldier, as, besides bringing him into near relations with a nobleman so amiable, it placed him where he was enabled to gratify his military tastes by seeing war carried on upon a larger and more scientific scale, and, it may be added, under one of the very best masters. He accordingly

repaired to head-quarters, and from thence accompanied Lord Rawdon in his rapid and successful movement for the relief of Ninety-Six.

It was in the course of this expedition that Lord Edward exhibited, or rather was detected in, a trait of personal courage, of that purely adventurous kind which is seldom found in romance, and of which the following particulars have been related by the distinguished person then acting as adjutant-general.

"Among the varied duties which developed upon me, as chief of the staff, a most material one was obtaining intelligence. This was effected partly by the employment of intelligent spies in various directions, and partly by frequent reconnaissances, which last were not devoid of danger, from the superior knowledge of the country possessed by the enemy. Upon these occasions I constantly found Lord Edward by my side, with the permission of our noble chief, who wished our young friend to see everything connected with real service. In fact the danger enhanced the value of the enterprise in the eyes of this brave young creature. In approaching the position of Ninety-Six, the enemy's light troops in advance became more numerous, and rendered more frequent patrols necessary upon our part.

"I was setting out upon a patrol, and sent to apprise Lord Edward; but he was nowhere to be found, and I proceeded without him, when, at the end

of two miles, upon emerging from the forest, I found him engaged with *two* of the enemy's irregular horse: he had wounded one of his opponents, when his sword broke in the middle, and he must have soon fallen in the unequal contest, had not his enemies fled on perceiving the head of my column. I rated him most soundly, as you may imagine for the undisciplined act of leaving the camp, at so critical a time, without the general's permission. He was, or pretended to be, very penitent, and compounded for my reporting him at head-quarters, provided I would let him accompany me, in the hope of some other enterprise. It was impossible to refuse the fellow, whose frank, manly, and ingenuous manner would have won over even a greater tyrant than myself. In the course of the day we took some prisoners, which I made him convey to head-quarters, with a *Bellerophon* message, which he fairly delivered. Lord Moira gravely rebuked him; but I could never find that he lost much ground with his chief for his chivalrous valour."

After the relief of Ninety-Six, Lord Rawdon, whose health had suffered severely from the climate, found it advisable to return to England, in consequence of which Lord Edward rejoined his regiment.

The calm that succeeded Lord Rawdon's departure from South Carolina, owing to the activity with which he had retrieved the affairs of the royal forces, and thus established an

equipoise of strength between the two parties, could be expected, of course, only to last till one of them had become powerful enough to disturb it. Accordingly, in the autumn, General Greene, having received reinforcements from another quarter, proceeded, with his accustomed vigour, to resume offensive operations; and, by his attack upon Colonel Stuart, at Eutaw Springs, gave rise to one of the best fought actions that had occurred during the war. Though the meed of victory, on this occasion, was left doubtful between the claimants, that of honour is allowed to have been fairly the due of both. So close, indeed, and desperate was the encounter, that every officer engaged is said to have had, personally, and hand to hand, an opportunity of distinguishing himself; and Lord Edward, who, we may take for granted, was among the foremost in the strife, received a severe wound in the thigh, which left him insensible on the field.

In this helpless situation he was found by a poor negro, who carried him off on his back to his hut, and there nursed him most tenderly, till he was well enough of his wound to bear removing to Charlestown. This negro was no other than the "faithful Tony," whom, in gratitude for the honest creature's kindness, he now took into his service, and who continued devotedly attached to his noble master to the end of his career.

It had been intended that Major Doyle, on the departure

of Lord Rawdon, should resume the station he had before held on the staff of Lord Cornwallis; but in consequence of this irruption of new forces into the province, he was requested by General Goold, who had succeeded to the chief command, still to continue to him the aid of his local knowledge and experience, so as to avert the mischiefs which a total want of confidence in most of the persons newly appointed to command now threatened. Major Doyle, therefore, again took upon himself the duties of adjutant-general and public secretary, and proceeded, vested with full powers, to the scene of the late action, for the purpose both of ascertaining the true state of affairs, and of remedying the confusion into which they had been thrown. Here he found Lord Edward slowly recovering from his wound, and the following is the account which he gives of his young friend:—"I am not sure that he was not then acting as aide-de-camp to Stuart, as the 19th, I think, was not there. At all events, he had been foremost in the *mêlée*, as usual, and received a very severe wound in the thigh. At this same time, Colonel Washington, a distinguished officer of the enemy's cavalry, was severely wounded and made prisoner; and while I was making preparations to send them down comfortably to Charlestown, Lord Edward, forgetting his own wound, offered his services to take charge of his gallant enemy. I saw him every day till he recovered, about which

time I was sent to England with the public despatches."

To these notices of a part of his lordship's life, hitherto so little known, it would be unjust not to add the few words of comment, as eloquently as they are cordially expressed, with which the gallant writer closes his communication on the subject :—

"Of my lamented and ill-fated friend's excellent qualities I should never tire in speaking. I never knew so loveable a person, and every man in the army, from the general to the drummer, would cheer the expression. His frank and open manner, his universal benevolence, his *gaieté de cœur*, his valour almost chivalrous, and, above all, his unassuming tone, made him the idol of all who served with him. He had great animal spirits, which bore him up against all fatigue; but his courage was entirely independent of those spirits—it was a valour *sui generis*.

"Had fortune happily placed him in a situation, however difficult, where he could legitimately have brought those varied qualities into play, I am confident he would have proved a proud ornament to his country."

It may not perhaps, though anticipating a period so much later, appear altogether ill-timed to mention in this place, that when Lord Edward lay suffering under the fatal wounds

of which he died in 1798, a military man connected with government, who had known him at this time in Charlestown, happening to allude, during a visit to him in prison, to the circumstances under which they had first become acquainted, the gallant sufferer exclaimed — "Ah! I was wounded then in a very different cause; that was in fighting *against* liberty—this, in fighting *for* it."

It is, indeed, not a little striking that there should have been engaged at this time, on opposite sides, in America, two noble youths, Lafayette and Lord Edward Fitzgerald, whose political principles afterwards so entirely coincided; and that, while one of them was fated soon to become the victim of an unsuccessful assertion of these principles, it has been the far brighter destiny of the other to contribute, more than once, splendidly to their triumph.

After the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at York Town—with which humiliating event the war on the continent of America may be said to have closed—the scene of active operations between England and her combined foes was transferred to the West Indies, where, at the beginning of 1783, we find Lord Edward, on the staff of General O'Hara, at St. Lucia.

CHAPTER II

NOT long after, he returned to Ireland, and, a dissolution of Parliament having taken place in the summer of this year, he was brought in by the Duke of Leinster for the borough of Athy. How insipid he found the life he was now doomed to lead, after the stormy scenes in which he had been lately engaged, appears from various passages of his letters at this time.

Being now anxious to improve, by a regular course of study, whatever practical knowledge of his profession he had acquired, he resolved to enter himself at Woolwich, and, at the beginning of 1786, proceeded to England for that purpose.

Young, ardent, and—to a degree rare in man's nature—affectionate, it was not likely that his heart should remain long unattached among the beauties of the gay and brilliant circle he now moved in; and, accordingly, during his late stay in Dublin, he had become, as he thought, deeply enamoured of the Lady Catharine Mead, second daughter of the Earl of Clanwilliam, who was, in five or six years after, married to Lord Powerscourt. To this lady, under the name of "Kate," he alludes in his correspondence with his mother and, however little that class

of fastidious readers who abound in the present day may be inclined to relish the homely style and simple feeling of those letters, there are many, we doubt not, for whom such unstudied domestic effusions—even independently of the insight they afford into a mind destined to dare extraordinary things—will have a more genuine charm, and awaken in them a far readier sympathy, than even the most ingenious letters, dictated, not by the heart, but head, and meant evidently for more eyes than those to which they are addressed. It is, besides, important, as involving even higher considerations than that of justice to the character of the individual himself, to show how gentle, generous, light-hearted, and affectionate was by nature the disposition of him whom a deep sense of his country's wrongs at length drove into the van of desperate rebellion, and brought, in the full prime of all his noble qualities, to the grave.

In the summer of this year, the Duke of Richmond, being called away in his official capacity, on a tour of inspection to the islands of Guernsey, Jersey, &c., took Lord Edward with him; and the young military student was not insensible of the value of those

opportunities of instruction which such a survey, under circumstances so favourable to inquiry, offered.

During the absence of the Duke, Lord Edward passed his time chiefly at —, the seat of Lord —, who was not far from Goodwood; and the tone of the letters he wrote from thence must have sufficiently prepared his mother's mind for the important change his affections were now about to undergo.

The rapid progress already made by the charms of Miss —, (unconsciously, on her part, and almost equally so, at the beginning, on his), in effacing the vivid impression left by a former object, is described in Lord Edward's letters more naturally than it could be in any other words. For some time he continued to struggle against this new fascination, and, though without any of those obligations to constancy which a return of his first love might have imposed, seemed reluctant to own, even to himself, that his affections could be so easily unrooted. The charm, however, was too powerful to be thus resisted; and the still fainter and fainter mention of Lady Catharine in his letters, till at length her name wholly disappears, marks as plainly the gradual disaffection of his heart as the deserted sands tell the slow ebbing of the tide.

On the departure of his mother and sisters for Nice, Lord Edward accompanied them, and remained there till the opening of Parliament

made it necessary for him to attend his public duties in Ireland. On the few important questions that were brought, during this session, before the House, his name is invariably to be found in the very small minority which the stock of Irish patriotism, at this time but scanty, supplied. From the opinions, too, respecting his brother legislators, which he expressed, it will be seen that the standard by which he judged of public men and their conduct was, even at this period, of no very accommodating nature; and that the seeds of that feeling which, in after days, broke out into indignant revolt, were already fast ripening.

In the determination he expressed, as politic as it was manly, not only to persevere, in spite of disgust and difficulty, towards the object he had in view, but even to assume an air of confidence in his cause when most hopeless of it, we have a feature of his character disclosed to us which more than any other, perhaps, tended to qualify him for the enterprise to which, fatally for himself, he devoted the latter years of his life. In a struggle like that, of which the chances were so uncertain, and where some of the instruments necessary to success were so little congenial to his nature, it is easy to conceive how painfully often he must have had to summon up the self-command here described, to enable him to hide from those embarked with him his own hopelessness and disgust.

The warm attachment to Miss —, of which we have already traced the first dawnings, continued unaltered through all change of scene and society ; though, from his silence on the subject, in every letter he wrote home, it would appear that, even to his mother—the habitual depositary of all his thoughts—he had not yet confided the secret of his new passion. On his return to England, however, but a very short time elapsed before it became manifest not only how deeply and devotedly he was attached, but, unluckily, how faint were the hopes of his ever succeeding in his suit. The Duke of Richmond, who felt naturally a warm interest in both parties, was very desirous, it seems, that the union should take place ; but the father of the young lady decidedly opposed himself to it ; and the more strongly to mark his decision on the subject, at length peremptorily forbade Lord Edward his house.

To be thus frustrated in any object whatever would have been, to a sanguine spirit like his, where he had embarked

all his fondest hopes, nor was without grounds for flattering himself that, but for this interference, he might have been successful, the effect of such a repulse in saddening and altogether unhinging his mind may be, without difficulty, conceived.

Finding that his spirits, instead of rallying, were, on the contrary, sinking every day more and more, under this disappointment, while, from the want of any active and regular employment, his mind was left helplessly the victim of its own broodings, he resolved to try how far absence and occupation might bring relief : and as his present regiment, the 54th, was now at New Brunswick, in Nova Scotia, he determined on joining it. Fortunately, this resolution found a seconding impulse in that love of a military life which was so leading a feeling with him ; and, about the latter end of May, without acquainting even his mother with his design, lest, in her fond anxiety, she might interpose to prevent it, he sailed for America.

CHAPTER III

It has often been asserted that Lord Edward's adoption of republican principles is to be traced back to the period when he first served in America ; and that it was while fighting against the assertors of liberty in that country he imbibed so strong a feeling of sympathy with their cause. This supposition, however, will be found to have but few grounds, even of probability, to support it. At that boyish period of his life, between seventeen and twenty, he was little likely to devote any very serious consideration to the political merits of the question in which he "fleshed his maiden sword." But, even granting him to have been disposed, under such circumstances, to consider which party was right in the struggle, the result, most probably, would have been—allowing fully for the hereditary bias of his opinions—to enlist, for the time, at least, not only his feelings, but his reason, on the side on which his own prospects and fame were immediately interested.

At the time, however, which we are now employed in considering, a great change had taken place in the complexion of his life. Disappointment in—what, to youth, is every thing—the first strong affection of the heart, had given a check

to that flow of spirits which had before borne him so buoyantly along ; while his abstraction from society left him more leisure to look inquiringly into his own mind, and there gather those thoughts that are ever the fruit of long solitude and sadness. The repulse which his suit had met with from the father of his fair relative had, for its chief ground, he knew, the inadequacy of his own means and prospects to the support of a wife and family in that style of elegant competence to which the station of the young lady herself had hitherto accustomed her ; and the view, therefore, he had been disposed naturally to take of the pomps and luxuries of high life, as standing in the way of all simple and real happiness, was thus but too painfully borne out by his own bitter experience of their influence.

In this temper of mind it was that he now came to the contemplation of a state of society (as far as it can deserve to be so called) entirely new to him ; where nature had retained in her own hands not only the soil, but the inhabitants, and civilization had not yet enacted those sacrifices of natural equality and freedom by which her blessings are—in not a few respects, perhaps, dearly—pur-

chased. Instead of those gradations of rank, those artificial privileges, which, as one of the means of subduing the strong to the weak, have been established, in some shape or other, in all civilized communities, he observed here no other distinction between man and man than such as nature herself, by the different apportionment of her own gifts, had marked out — by a disparity either in mental capacity, or in those powers of agility and strength, which, where every man must depend mainly on himself, and so little is left conventional or uncontested, are the endowments most necessary. To those physical requisites, too, Lord Edward, as well from his own personal activity, as from the military notions he in general mixed up with his views of human affairs, was inclined to attach high value.

While his lordship was engaged in the difficult and adventurous journey through the woods to Quebec, which has become famous, and out of which none but a spirit and frame hardy as his own could have contrived to extract enjoyment, affairs interesting both to his family and himself were taking place in England, where, on account of the serious illness of the king at the commencement of the year, it had become necessary to bring under the consideration of Parliament the speedy establishment of a Regency. The Duke of Leinster, whose late desertion from the ranks of the Opposition had been regarded less, perhaps, with anger than

regret by his party, was now, by the line he took on the great question of the Regency, in the Irish House of Lords, restored to his natural position; and was one of the personages deputed to carry that memorable Address to the Prince of Wales, on which, from the glimpse it gave of the consequences likely to arise from the exercise of a separate will by Ireland, was founded one of the most plausible pretexts for the extinction of her Legislature.

Lord Edward's adoption by the native Indians, which he mentions in a letter, took place at Detroit, through the medium of the Chief of the Six Nations, David Hill, by whom he was formally inducted into the Bear Tribe, and made one of their Chiefs. The document by which this wild honour was conferred upon him has been preserved among his papers, and is, in Indian and English, as follows:—

“David Hill's letter to Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Chief of the Bear Tribe.

*Waghgongh Sen non Pryer
Ne nen Seghyrage ni i*

Ye Sayats Eghnidai

Ethonayyere

David Hill

Karonghyontye

Iyogh Saghmontyon

21 June, 1789.

“I, David Hill, Chief of the Six Nations, give the name of Eghnidai to my friend Lord Edward Fitzgerald, for which I hope he will remember me as long as he lives.

“The name belongs to the Bear Tribe”

We have seen how sanguinely, throughout the greater part of his journey, he still cherished the thought that, even yet, the fond prayer of his heart might be granted, and the young person he so tenderly loved become his own. But this dream was, unfortunately, soon to have an end. At the beginning of December, having descended the Mississippi, he arrived at New Orleans. It had been his wish to extend his journey still further, and to pay a visit to the silver mines of Spanish America; but, on applying to the proper authorities for permission, it was, we learn from his own letters, refused to him. His friends at home, indeed, had heard with considerable apprehension of his purposed visit to the mines; as, in the event of a war, which seemed now inevitable, between England and Spain, such a journey would be attended with embarrassment, if not danger. The refusal, however, of the Mexican governor to give him permission put a stop to his design; and he was now, therefore, on the wing for his beloved home, anticipating all the welcome and the happiness which his own affection, he could not but feel, deserved.

It was at this very moment—while so fondly persuading himself that the fair object of his passion might, one day, be his own—he received intelligence that, in the month of April preceding, she had become the wife of another. Such a shock, to a heart buoyant as his, came but the heavier for the self-illusion he had been

indulging; and, had it not been for his mother, whose existence, he knew, was locked up in his, it may be doubted whether he would ever again have returned to England.

On his arrival in London he was, by the merest accident, spared the pain of a scene which could not fail to have been distressing to others as well as himself. Impatient, as may be supposed, to see his mother, who was then residing in London, he hastened instantly to her house, and arrived there just as a large party, among whom were the young bride of the preceding April and her lord, had seated themselves to dinner. In a second or two the unexpected visitor would have been among them, had not General Fox, who was one of the guests, and recognised Lord Edward's voice, hastened out to stop him, and thus prevented an encounter which would have been embarrassing to all parties.

In taking leave of this interesting passage of his lordship's short life, it is not without some pain that the reflection suggests itself, how different might have been his doom, both in life and death, had this suit, in which he so sanguinely persevered, been successful; nor can we help adding, that the exemplary domestic virtues, which through life distinguished the noble lady he thus loved, while they exalt our opinion of the man who could, thus early, appreciate such excellence, but deepen ten-fold our sympathy with the pain he must have felt in losing her.

CHAPTER IV

IN active professional employment would now have been his only safeguard, both against vain regrets for the past, and too sanguine aspirations after the future; and there was a prospect, immediately on his return to England, of employment, such as he himself could have most wished, being found for him. The threatening armaments of Spain at this moment called for corresponding efforts on the part of Great Britain; and, among other measures of offence, an expedition against Cadiz was contemplated. One of Lord Edward's first visits, on his arrival, was to his uncle, the Duke of Richmond, and the information which it had been in his power to collect, respecting the state of the Spanish colonies in America, was, of course, listened to by the minister with peculiar interest. Finding, also, that his nephew, during the journey he took through Spain, in 1788, had turned his time to account, and, besides those general military observations which his "technical eye" as a soldier enabled him to make, had taken an opportunity, while at Cadiz, of drawing plans of the fortifications of that city, his grace invited him to meet Mr Pitt and Mr Dundas that evening; and these ministers,

having themselves questioned the young officer on the same subjects, offered immediately, as we have been informed, to promote him by brevet, and give him the command of the expedition intended against Cadiz. This Lord Edward readily accepted, and the duke, at parting, told him that he should, on the following day, report what had been agreed upon to the king, and hoped he might also add, that his nephew was no longer in opposition. Free, as he then supposed himself, from the responsibility which a seat in Parliament imposed, Lord Edward answered that it was his determination for the future to devote himself exclusively to his profession; and he could, therefore, without any difficulty, promise not to appear in opposition to the Government.

On seeing his mother, however, the following day, his lordship was, for the first time, informed that, notwithstanding her grace's earnest remonstrances, his brother, the Duke of Leinster, had, before his arrival, returned him for the county of Kildare. Finding his position thus altered, he lost no time in apprising the Duke of Richmond, who, on learning the new views of the subject which this discovery

had occasioned, expressed strong displeasure against his nephew, and accused him of breaking his word with the king; adding, at the same time, that neither this proffered appointment, nor any other favour from ministers was to be expected by him, if he did not detach himself from the opposition and give his vote to Government. This Lord Edward, it is hardly necessary to say, promptly refused, and the two relatives parted, with a degree of anger on the part of the uncle, which is suspected, but, we should think, unjustly, to have had some share in the harsh measure taken subsequently, of dismissing Lord Edward, without even the forms of inquiry, from the army.

Thus disappointed of an employment which would have been so gratifying at once to his ambition and his tastes, he had now no other resources for the diversion of his thoughts than such as his parliamentary duties in Ireland, and the society of a few favourite friends in London afforded him. This want of any absorbing pursuits or interests of his own left him free to extend his sympathies to the concerns of others; and, being neither pledged to a certain set of opinions by virtue of any office, nor under that fear of change which high station and wealth engender, he could now give way without reserve to his judgment and feelings, and take part *with* the oppressed and *against* the oppressor to the full length that his own

natural sense of justice and benevolence dictated.

Left thus open to the influence of all that was passing around him, it may be conceived that the great events now in progress in France could have appealed to few hearts more thoroughly prepared, both by nature and position, to go along with their movement. In the society, too, which he now chiefly cultivated—that of Mr Fox, Mr Sheridan, and their many distinguished friends—he found those political principles, to which he now, for the first time, gave any serious attention, recommended at once to his reason and imagination by all the splendid sanctions with which genius, wit, eloquence, and the most refined good-fellowship could invest them. Neither was it to be expected, while thus imbibing the full spirit of the new doctrines, that he would attend much to those constitutional guards and conditions with which the Whig patriots, at that time, fenced round even their boldest opinions—partly from a long-transmitted reverence for the forms of the constitution, and partly, also, from a prospective view to their own attainment of power, and to the great inconvenience of being encumbered, on entering into office, by opinions which it might not only be their interest, but their duty, to retract.

From both these wholesome restraints on political ardour, Lord Edward was free; having derived, it may be supposed, from his Irish education in

politics but a small portion of respect for the English constitution, and being by nature too little selfish, even had he any ulterior interests, to let a thought of them stand in the way of the present generous impulse.

At the latter end of 1792, that momentous crisis, when France, standing forth on the ruins of her monarchy, proclaimed herself a Republic, and hurled fierce defiance against the thrones of the world—Lord Edward, unwilling to lose such a spectacle of moral and political excitement, hastened over to Paris, without communicating his intentions even to the duchess.

From a disposition so ardent and fearless, discretion was the last virtue to be expected; and his friends, therefore, whatever alarm or regret it might cause them, could hardly have felt much surprise when the announcement that follows made its appearance in the papers of Paris and London:—

“Paris, Nov. 19th.

“Yesterday the English arrived in Paris assembled at White’s Hotel, to celebrate the triumph of victories gained over their late invaders by the armies of France. Though the festival was intended to be purely British, the meeting was attended by citizens of various countries, by deputies of the Convention, by generals, and other officers of the armies then stationed or visiting Paris,—J. H. Stone in the chair.

“Among the toasts were, ‘The armies of France: may the example of its citizen

soldiers be followed by all enslaved countries, till tyrants and tyranny be extinct.’

“An address proposed to the National Convention.—

Among several toasts proposed by the citizens Sir R. Smith and Lord E. Fitzgerald, was the following: ‘May the patriotic airs of the German Legion (ça Ira, the Carmagnole, Marseillaise March, &c.) soon become the favourite music of every army, and may the soldier and the citizen join in the chorus.’

“General Dillon proposed ‘The people of Ireland; and may government profit by the example of France, and Reform prevent Revolution.’

“Sir Robert Smith and Lord E. Fitzgerald renounced their titles; and a toast, proposed by the former, was drunk:—‘The speedy abolition of all hereditary titles and feudal distinctions.’”

The simple sentence in one of his letters, “I dine to-day with Madame de Sillery,” is far more pregnant with events and feelings interesting to the reader than from the short and careless manner in which it is here introduced could be suspected. Madame de Sillery (the celebrated Comtesse de Genlis), had, but a day or two before the date of this letter, returned from England, where, accompanied by her pupil Mademoiselle d’Orleans, and her adopted daughter Pamela, she had been, for the last twelve or thirteen months, living in retirement. The only interruption to this privacy was during the few weeks passed by her under the

roof of Mr Sheridan, at Isleworth, during which time Lord Edward was, more than once, afforded an opportunity of meeting her, but from a horror of learned ladies, always declined that honour. Though his imagination, therefore, had been sufficiently prepared by the descriptions which he had heard of the young Pamela, to find much in her that would excite both his interest and admiration, he had never, till the time of his present visit to Paris, seen her.

It could hardly have been more than an evening or two before the date of the above letter, that, being at one of the theatres of Paris, he saw, through a *loge grillée* near him, a face with which he was exceedingly struck, as well from its own peculiar beauty, as from the strong likeness the features bore to those of a lady, then some months dead, for whom he was known to have entertained a very affectionate regard. On inquiring who the young person was that had thus riveted his attention, he found it was no other than the very Pamela, of whose beauty he had heard so much—the adopted, or (as may now be said, without scruple) actual daughter of Madame de Genlis by the Duke of Orleans. Instantly, all his prepossessions against the learned mother vanished; an acquaintance, from that very night, I believe, commenced between them, and he was seldom after seen absent from the fair Pamela's side.

In some natures, love is a fruit that ripens quickly; and

that such was its growth in Lord Edward's warm heart the whole history of his life fully testifies. In the present instance, where there was so much to interest and attract on both sides, a liking felt by either could not fail to become reciprocal. The perfect disinterestedness, too, of the young soldier threw, at once, out of consideration a difficulty that might have checked more worldly suitors; and, in somewhat less than a month after their meeting at Paris, Mademoiselle Sims (the name by which Madame de Genlis had chosen to designate her daughter) became Lady Edward Fitzgerald.

The marriage took place at Tournay,—Madame de Genlis having consented so far to resume the charge of her illustrious pupil, Mademoiselle d'Orleans, as to place her in safety beyond the borders of France.

M. de Chartres, afterwards King of France, was one of the witnesses of the ceremony.

In the meantime, while the marriage was thus in progress, the publicity given by the journals of both countries to the details of the English Festival, held lately at Paris, had produced the consequences which Lord Edward himself had, in a great measure, anticipated. Without any further inquiry, and, so far, no doubt, unjustly and oppressively, his lordship, together with two or three other officers, who had offended in the same manner, was dismissed from the army. To this treatment of his noble

relative, Mr Fox (in speaking on a motion of the Secretary of War for the employment of invalids, &c.), thus took occasion to advert :—

“ While upon the subject of military, he deemed it a fit opportunity to take notice of some occurrences which had taken place, but which he could not know the particulars of but from report. He alluded to certain dismissals which had been made in the army, as those of Lord Semple, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and also Captain Gawler. That there might be good grounds for these dismissals was possible, but they were unknown because they were undeclared ; one only ground was suggested by the public voice, namely, their having subscribed to the fund raised for the purpose of enabling the French to carry on the war against their invaders. . . . One of these officers, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, was his near relation, and of him he would say, from his personal knowledge, that

the service did not possess a more zealous, meritorious, or promising member ; he had served his country in actual service, and bled in its service.”

On the 2nd of January, 1793, Lord Edward, with his young bride, arrived in London. He had written to ask his mother's consent to the marriage ; but whether his impatience had allowed him to wait for her answer appears somewhat doubtful.

After remaining about three weeks with the Duchess of Leinster, the new-married couple proceeded to Dublin, where the Session of Parliament had commenced on the 10th of January ; and in an Irish newspaper, dated the 26th of that month, we find their arrival thus announced : “ Yesterday morning, arrived the Princess Royal, Captain Browne, from Parkgate, with the Right Hon. Lord Edward Fitzgerald, his lady and suit, and several other persons of quality.”

CHAPTER V

IN order to convey to our readers any clear idea of the sort of political atmosphere into which Lord Edward—himself more than sufficiently excited—now plunged at once on his return to Dublin, it will be necessary to recall briefly to their recollection the history of Irish affairs for the last fourteen or fifteen years preceding. In the year 1776, the people of Ireland first learned the dangerous lesson, that to the fears, rather than the justice, of their rulers, they must thenceforward look for either right or favour. In the summer of that year, America proclaimed her independence, and in the course of the autumn the first link was struck from the chain of the Catholic ; the law then allowing him to acquire an interest in the soil, which he had hitherto trod but by sufferance, as a serf. Small as was the seed of liberty thus sown, all that Ireland has since gained may be considered as its fruits. In a year or two after, the cause of American independence was espoused openly by the courts of France and Spain. The resources of England were reduced to the lowest ebb, and the fleets of the enemy menaced the British shores. In this predicament the town of Belfast, which had been invaded by the French

eighteen years before, applied to Government for protection, and received the memorable answer, "We have not the means ;—you must defend yourselves." Never was an avowal of feebleness, on the part of a Government, responded to by a more noble or generous manifestation of strength on the part of the people. Instantly an immense army of volunteers sprang up, as if by enchantment, through the country. The sympathies of all—even of the outcast Catholic—rallied round the patriotic standard ; and could Ireland then have claimed the services of all her sons, she would have exhibited to the eyes of the world, at this magnificent moment, that only true fortress of freedom, an armed people. As it was, in less than a year from their first formation, the volunteer force amounted to 80,000 men : the hour of England's weakness was found to be that of Ireland's strength ; and in this attitude, as formidable to her rulers as to the enemy, she demanded and obtained from England a free trade and independent legislature.

Such a spirit, once evoked, was not easily to be laid. Having secured the independence of their Parliament, the next task of these armed

patriots was to effect its reform; and, accordingly, in the year 1783, a Convention of this body assembled in Dublin, holding their deliberations on Reform, even during the sitting of Parliament, and assuming powers and functions co-ordinate with those of the two acting branches of the legislature. How far this military intervention might have ventured to proceed, had it not been guided by a leader so temperate, and, at the same time, so popular as Lord Charlemont, it is impossible to say; but that a collision was on the point of taking place between these armed deliberators and the legislative counsel of the nation must be evident to every reader of the history of that crisis. It is, indeed, now well known, that there was, at that moment, in full equipment, at Belfast, a train of artillery, with a considerable supply of ammunition, and a large corps of volunteers, ready to march to the aid of the Convention, if necessary.

Formidable, however, as this body appeared in numbers and spirit, it was yet but a very small portion of the Irish nation, and had even precluded itself from the sympathies it might have commanded from the great bulk of the people by rejecting, more than once, a proposition laid before it for the extension of the elective franchise to Catholics. Against such an assembly, therefore, so little backed by the collective sense of the nation, it is not wonderful that the governing party should feel

itself sufficiently strong to assume, at once, a high tone of determination and resistance. A motion for Reform, upon a plan previously agreed on in the Convention, having been brought before the House of Commons by Mr Flood—himself dressed in the volunteer uniform, and surrounded by other members, some of them Delegates, in the same military array—after a long and stormy debate, maintained, on both sides, with a spirit of defiance which an eye-witness of the scene describes as “almost terrific,” the rejection of the measure was carried by a majority of 159 to 77, and a lesson of national union thus inculcated upon Irishmen, from which, through the eventful years that followed, they were not slow in profiting.

Already, indeed, had there appeared symptoms of friendly approximation among those sects into which the people of Ireland are even more politically than religiously divided, and from whose disunion all the misery of their common country springs. Among the Protestant voices of the senate, some already had pleaded eloquently for the Catholic. A bishop of the established church—one hardly, however, to be cited as a churchman—had said, in addressing the volunteers on this now novel subject, “Tyranny is not government, and allegiance is due only to protection.” The Presbyterians, too, of the north, the last, it might be supposed, this new light could reach, were, on the contrary,

the first and promptest to sacrifice all sectarian prejudices on the wide national altar of union and freedom. The volunteers of Belfast had given instructions to their delegates in the Convention to support, as one of the essential ingredients of Reform, the free admission of Catholics to all the rights of freemen; and, among the circumstances indicative of the growing temper of the times, it could not fail to be observed, that the able Catholic divine, O'Leary, on entering the doors of the military Congress, was received with a full salute of rested arms by the volunteers.

Hitherto, however, this new feeling of liberality had been confined, comparatively, but to a few, and even in them, notwithstanding the increased heat of the political temperature of the times, was, as yet, but imperfectly ripened. If civil and religious liberty are, as they have been sometimes described, twins, it is lamentable to observe how much more tardy and stunted is, in most cases, the growth of the latter than of the former. It was not till convinced of their own weakness by the failure of this great effort for Reform, that the attention of the Whigs and other more daring speculators in politics was turned seriously and sincerely to those disqualifying statutes which had robbed their cause of the great momentum of the general mind and left them a powerless colony in the midst of a disfranchised nation. From this moment, Catholic Freedom

went hand in hand, in all their projects, with Reform; and the same Dissenters who had formed the flower of the civic army in 1782, were now the foremost to seek in a cordial reconciliation of all sects a more extended and national basis for their patriotism.

This growing coalition between the Catholics and the Dissenters, to which the one party brought intelligence and republican spirit, and the other deep-rooted discontent and numerical force, had for its chief cement a feeling, common to both, of impatience under the exactions of the established church; and a demonstration, among many others, of their joint arms against this vulnerable point, occurred in the year 1787, when the celebrated Father O'Leary, already mentioned, found himself seconded by Dr Campbell, and other Presbyterian ministers, in his well-known and amusing controversy with the Bishop of Cloyne.

Still, however, their mutual tie was but slight and distant; nor was it till the astounding burst of the French revolution had scattered hopes and fears of change through all nations that their alliance began to assume any very decisive or formidable consistency. In the meantime, the Government, with that infatuation which attends all Governments so situated, had, in proportion as the people took bolder views of the responsibility of the trust committed to their rulers, gone on abusing that trust by such a system of corruption as,

for its waste and shamelessness, defies all parallel. As far as openness, indeed, may be thought to take away from the danger or ignominy of such traffic, neither in the buyer or the bought was there any want of this quality in the Irish market; and the well-known threat, or rather lure, held out by Lord Clare to a refractory opposition, is worth volumes in portraying the spirit both of his own times and those that preceded them. "Half a million," he said, "or more, had been expended, some years before, to break an Opposition; and the same, or a greater sum, might be necessary now."

It was in speaking of that period—the portion of it, at least, between 1784 and 1790—that Mr Grattan made use of the following strong language: "You have no adequate responsibility in Ireland, and politicians laugh at the sword of justice, which falls short of their heads, and only precipitates on their reputation . . . and yet in this country we have had victims; the aristocracy has, at different times, been a victim; the whole people of Ireland, for almost an entire century, were a victim; but ministers, in all their criminal succession—here is a chasm, a blank in your history. Sir, you have in Ireland no axe—therefore, no good minister."

The part taken by the Irish parliament on the question of the Regency, in 1789, had consequences, both immediate and remote, of the most signal importance to Ireland. One

of the first effects of the new division of parties which then took place was to throw an immense accession of strength into the ranks of the Opposition; and this reinforcement of the popular cause accruing just at the moment when the example of the French revolution was beginning to agitate all minds, formed such a concurrence of exciting causes, at the beginning of the year 1790, as diffused the ruffle of an approaching storm over the whole face of society. Words spoken in high places, fall with even more than their due weight on the public ear; and the language of the parliamentary orators at this period lost none of its impression from the millions of echoes that, out of doors, repeated it.

"Do you imagine," said Mr Grattan, "that the laws of this country can retain due authority under a system such as yours—a system which not only poisons the source of the law, but pollutes the seats of judgment? . . . The present administration is an enemy to the law: first, because it has broken the law; secondly, because it has attempted to poison the true sources both of legislation and justice; and, however the friends of that administration may talk plausibly on the subject of public tranquility, they are, in fact, the ringleaders of sedition placed in authority. Rank majorities may give a nation law, but rank majorities cannot give law authority." In the course of the same session (1790) Mr O'Neill, while anim-

adverting upon the corrupt influence of Government, thus predicted but too truly the catastrophe to which they were hurrying:—"I do say, and I say it prophetically, that the people will resist. The members of this house bear but a small proportion to the people at large. There are gentlemen outside these doors, of as good education and of as much judgment of the relative duties of representation as any man within doors; and matters are evidently ripening and will come to a crisis."

The immense efficacy of clubs and societies, as instruments of political agitation, had been evinced by the use which the workers of the French Revolution had made of them; and it is a striking proof of the little foresight with which the steps even of the most cautious are sometimes taken, that to no less moderate a Whig than Lord Charlemont did Ireland owe, at this crisis, the first example of that sort of combination for political purposes which became afterwards such a lever in the hands of her millions. At the latter end of 1789 this excellent nobleman had, with the aid of Mr Grattan, founded a Whig Club in Dublin, and, shortly after, a similar society was, through his lordship's means, instituted at Belfast. To cultivate the old Revolution principles, as distinguished from the democratic theories of the day, was the professed object of these clubs; but it was soon seen that the new revolutionary school had, in the minds of most of the

northern zealots of freedom, superseded the venerable doctrines of 1688. The example set by Lord Charlemont was, in all but its moderation, imitated; other clubs, keeping pace more boldly with the advancing spirit of the times, succeeded; and, at length, in the ensuing year, 1791, was formed that deep and comprehensive "Plot of Patriots" (as they themselves described it), the Society of United Irishmen;—professing, as the aim and principal of their Union, "the greatest happiness of the greatest number," and calling upon all sects and denominations of Irishmen to join them in the one great, common cause of political, religious, and national enfranchisement.

Among the new features which distinguished this club from its predecessors, the prominence now for the first time given to the wrongs of the Catholics, as one of those evils of which the whole nation should call loudly for the redress, was by far the most important. Too long had the old Whig feeling of hatred to Popery succeeded in blinding many of the Protestant advocates of freedom to the true interests of that cause which they but as colonists, not as Irishmen, pleaded. Agreeing to "call it freedom if themselves were free," they took no account of the great mass of living materials, out of which alone the pile of national liberty can be constructed. The Volunteer Convention of 1783, in all their pride of patriotism, were yet unwilling,

as we have seen, to connect the question of Catholic freedom with Reform; and, most absurdly, while demanding a wide extension of the right of suffrage, were for leaving the numbers of those who could exercise it as limited as ever. The Whig Club too, though, as individuals, some of their body were warm advocates of the Catholics, yet, as a society, so far threw damp upon the question as to exclude it from among their subjects of discussion.

By this impolitic backwardness in their cause, the great bulk of the people were by degrees, alienated from all confidence in the legitimate guardians of their rights—were left to listen to the call of other and bolder leaders, and to look to that ominous light now kindled in the north as their sole and sure beacon of invitation and hope. To those whose object it was to rally all the nation's energies round a flag of a far deeper green than the pale standard of Whiggism, this distrust of their Parliamentary friends by the people was by no means unwelcome; nor, as far as courtesy to the individuals in question would permit, did they fail to encourage it. "Trust," said they, in one of their addresses, "as little to your friends as to your enemies, in a manner where you can act only by yourselves. The will of the nation must be declared before any Reform can take place."

Anticipating, too (as they well might, under any Government less infatuated), the probability of their being, before

long, deprived of their hold upon the Catholics by a seasonable and liberal concession of their claims, they took care not to fall into the error which has been, in our own times, committed, of representing this concession, however important, as the "*one* thing needful," but thus, in another of their Addresses, guarded themselves against any such misconception or limitation of their views:—"In the sincerity of our souls do we desire Catholic Emancipation; but, were it obtained to-morrow, to-morrow should we go on as we do to-day, in the pursuit of that Reform which would still be wanting to ratify their liberties as well as our own."

With all this, however, it was still but by very slow degrees that the better order of Catholics lent themselves to the exciting call of their fellow-countrymen. Not, assuredly, from any tendency that there is in their faith, more than in most others, to weaken or counteract the spirit of liberty,—an assumption which the events of our own time must have sufficiently set to rest—but from the timidity and want of self-confidence engendered by a long course of slavery, and the hope still kept alive in their hearts of some boon from the free grace of government, they were at first, naturally, fearful of putting to hazard whatever advantages their present position might possess for the precarious and stormy chances of an alliance which seemed to offer no medium between success and ruin.

To this cautious line of policy the influence of some of their peers and chief gentry, who had hitherto taken the leading part in their deliberations, had been successful in restraining them; but the same impatience under aristocratic rule which was now pervading all Europe could not but find its way at length into the Councils of the Catholics. So late as the year 1791, these hereditary conductors of their cause had taken upon themselves, in the name of the whole body, to present an Address to the Lord Lieutenant, condemnatory of the spirit and tendency of the popular associations of the day, and leaving, with implicit loyalty, to the discretion of Government the measure of justice it might think proper to accord to their claims.

This offensive mixture, in their aristocratic leaders, of dictation to the people and servility to the Court was at once felt to have incapacitated them from being any longer the organs of a body rising into the proud attitude of assertors of their own rights. The proceedings of this small knot of lords and gentlemen were accordingly protested against by those whom they pretended to represent: and a separation having in consequence taken place between them and the great mass of the Catholics, the conduct of the cause devolved from thenceforth into the hands of commercial men of intelligence and spirit, whose position in society gave them an insight into the growing demands of the

country, and placed their minds, as it were, in contact with those popular influences and sympathies from which the proud seclusion in which they lived had insulated the former managers of their cause.

From this moment the political views of the Catholic Committee and the United Irish Societies began manifestly to converge towards the same formidable object—a general and nationalized league against English power. Even the feud which had for some time raged in the North between the lower classes of Roman Catholics and Presbyterians, and which has bequeathed, in the transmitted spirit of its Peep-o'-day boys, the curse of Orangeism to Ireland, could not prevent a great majority of the better order of both sects from drawing cordially towards a union, by which alone, they saw, their common objects could be effected. The appointment, indeed, of Theobald Wolfe Tone, the founder of the first society of United Irishmen, to be Secretary of the Catholic Committee, gave sufficiently intelligible warning that the time was at hand when the same spirit would be found to actuate both these bodies.

To the confluence of troubled waters which I have been here describing, the example and progress of the French Revolution were giving, every day, a more revolutionary colour and course. In the year 1790-1, the Irish volunteers had transmitted an address to the National Assembly of France, and received from them a long and fraternizing answer in return.

On the 14th of July, 1792, the town of Belfast, now foremost in the race of democracy, had celebrated by a grand Procession and Festival the anniversary of the French Revolution; and among the devices and inscriptions displayed on the occasion, one or two will sufficiently give a notion of the republican spirit that pervaded the whole ceremony. On a group of emblematic figures was inscribed, "Our Gallic brethren were born July 14, 1789:—alas! we are still in embryo." On the reverse, "Superstitious jealousy, the cause of the Irish Bastille: let us unite and destroy it." To this meeting the Catholic Committee of Dublin sent down a deputation, and a dinner given to those deputies, a day or two after the Festival, is thus described by Tone: "Chequered, at the head of the table, sat Dissenter and Catholic. The four flags, America, France Poland, Ireland, but *no England*."

It is not wonderful that, by such manifestations of public feeling, even the Government of that day, hardened as it was to all better appeals, should, at length, find itself alarmed into some show of justice. The justice, however, that is wrung from fear, but adds contempt to the former sense of wrongs; and the whole history of the concessions doled out to the Catholics, in this and the ensuing year, but exhibits, in its fullest perfection, that perverse art, in which Irish rulers have shown themselves such adepts, of throwing a blight over favours by the motive

and manner of conferring them—an art which unhappily has had the effect of rendering barren, thankless, and unblest, some of the fairest boons bestowed by England upon Ireland. At the beginning of this year (1792), a Bill, brought forward avowedly under the sanction of Government, gave to the Irish Catholics the right of admission to the Bar, and repealed one or two of the most odious of the penal statutes. But, almost at the same time, a respectful petition from that body, praying for "the restoration to them of some share in the elective franchise," was, with a degree of bitterness and indignity which seemed as if it were a relief after their late effort of liberality, spurned away from the table of the House of Commons;—thus not only poisoning the scanty measure of relief just afforded, but teaching the Catholic how to estimate the sudden access of generosity by which the very same Parliament was actuated towards them in the following year, when, in a moment of panic, they of themselves hurried forward to invest him with even more extensive rights than those which the petition, now so insultingly thrown out, solicited.

In the course of the session of 1792, two fearful predictions were uttered, of one of which the accomplishment followed but too speedily. In exposing the gross corruption of the Government, Mr Ponsonby said strongly, that "an hour would come when the country would endure any extremity rather than submit to

the system of influence that had been established"; and Mr Grattan, in the debate on the Catholic Bill, alluding to the prospect of a Union, which was then for the second or third time, in the course of the century, threatened, pronounced it a measure that "would be fatal to England, beginning with a false compromise which they might call a Union, to end in eternal separation, through the process of two civil wars."

The immediate effect of the haughty repulse which the Catholics suffered this session was to impress upon themselves and their Protestant advisers the necessity of acting with redoubled vigour in future, and of devising some plan by which the collective sense of the whole Catholic population might be brought to bear, peacefully and legally, but, at the same time, with all the weight implied in such formidable unanimity, upon the Government. This they were enabled to effect towards the close of 1792, by a system of delegation, embracing all the counties and many of the great towns and districts of Ireland. Writs were issued to the electoral bodies, who had been, in each place, chosen to name the delegates, and in the month of December, a Convention, representing the entire Catholic population, commenced its sittings with all the forms of a Legislative Assembly, in Dublin.

Authoritative and commanding in itself, as speaking the voice of at least three-fourths

of the nation, this body was also backed by a considerable proportion of the Protestant talent and spirit of the country, in and out of Parliament, as well as by the daily increasing confederacy of the Presbyterian republicans of the North. While the late Catholic Bill had been before the House, a petition was sent up, signed by numbers of the most respectable persons in Belfast, praying that the Legislature would repeal all penal laws against the Catholics, and place them on the same footing with their Protestant fellow-subjects.

Among other symptoms of the rapid progress now making towards that national union from which alone English supremacy has any danger to fear, it is mentioned that the Volunteers of Dublin, on the recent celebration of the 4th of November, had refused to parade, as usual, round the statue of King William, and that, while all of them had discarded their orange ribbons, some had even appeared, on that day, in cockades of the national green. But the event, among these minor indications of public feeling, in which the Government must have seen most formidably shadowed out the forthcoming results of their own obstinate misrule was the enthusiastic reception given at Belfast to the five Catholic Delegates, whom the General Committee had deputed to lay their Petition before the King. "On their departure," say the accounts of the day, "the assembled populace took the

horses from their carriage, and drew them quite through the town over the long bridge on the road to Donaghadee, amidst the loudest huzzas and cries of 'Success attend you,' 'Union,' 'Equal laws,' and 'Down with the Ascendency.'"

Such was the state of ominous excitement to which a long train of causes, foreign and domestic, all tending towards the same inevitable crisis, had concurred in winding up the public mind in Ireland, at the time when Lord Edward arrived to fix his residence in that country. He found the Parliament already assembled, and had not more than a day or two taken his seat, when, in the course of a Debate on an Address to the Lord Lieutenant, he, by one of those short bursts of feeling which have a far better chance of living in history than the most elaborate harangue, showed how unrestrainedly all his sympathies had, even at this time, committed themselves with the great national struggle in which his countrymen were engaged.

It was on the occasion of the Proclamation against the "First National Battalion," that Lord Edward Fitzgerald gave vent to his feelings in those few bold words, to which we have already adverted, and which have been recorded with such fidelity by all historians of the Irish Parliament. At the very end of the discussion, after several of the chief members of the Opposition, and, among others, Mr Grattan himself, had declared their approval of the Proclamation, and con-

demned strongly the republican language of some of the summonses and resolutions of the volunteers, Lord Edward, as if unable any longer to contain himself, started up, and with great energy of manner, said—"Sir, I give my most hearty disapprobation to this address, for I do think that the Lord Lieutenant and the majority of this House are the worst subjects the King has."

Loud cries of "to the Bar" and "take down his words" resounded instantly from all sides. The House was cleared in a moment, and nearly three hours elapsed before strangers were re-admitted. During this interval attempts were in vain made to induce the refractory member to apologise. All that either persuasion or the threatened rigour of the House could draw from him was a few equivocal words, in which, with some humour (if the report we have heard of them be true), he re-asserted his former obnoxious opinion, saying, "I am accused of having declared that I think the Lord Lieutenant and the majority of this House the worst subjects the King has :—I said so, 'tis true, and I'm sorry for it." If such really were the terms of his lordship's explanation, it can but little surprise us that the House should have come to a unanimous resolution, "that the excuse offered by the Right Hon. Edward Fitzgerald, commonly called Lord Edward Fitzgerald, for the said words so spoken, is unsatisfactory and insufficient."

This resolution was followed

by an order, passed also unanimously, "that Lord Edward Fitzgerald do attend at the Bar of this House to-morrow." On the following day he appeared accordingly in custody, at the Bar, and, being again called upon by the Speaker, offered a few words of explanation, of which no report has been preserved, but which could hardly have been of a very penitential nature, as on the question being put whether the House should receive the excuse, there appeared a minority of no less than 55 against accepting it.

In about a week after this occurrence, we find him again standing forth, almost singly, against Government, and raising his voice in reprobation of that system of coercion which the new aspect of affairs abroad was now emboldening them to adopt.

It was on the discussion of an Act thus specified, the Gunpowder Bill, that Lord Edward, as I have already intimated,

stood forth, almost alone, against the Government, condemning, particularly, the clause imposing penalties on the removal of arms from one place to another, and pronouncing the whole bill to be, from beginning to end, a penal law.

The Convention Bill, another of the coercive acts of this session, the sole effect of which was, by producing still deeper discontent, to render measures of still more searching severity necessary, was, it is true, combated, with his usual vigour, by Mr Grattan, in every stage. But he found but feeble support from the remainder of his party. Only three lords, the Duke of Leinster, the Earl of Charlemont, and the Earl of Arran, voted against the bill in the House of Peers, while Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Mr Grattan formed part of a minority of but 27 to 128, that recorded their reprobation of it in the House of Commons.

CHAPTER VI

IN reading Lord Edward's simple and—to an almost feminine degree—fond letters to his relatives, it is impossible not to feel how strange and touching is the contrast, between those pictures of a happy home which they so unaffectedly exhibit, and that dark and troubled sea of conspiracy and revolt into which the amiable writer of them, so soon afterwards, plunged; nor can we easily bring ourselves to believe that the joyous tenant of this little Lodge, the happy husband and father, dividing the day between his child and his flowers, could be the same man who, but a year or two after, placed himself at the head of rebel myriads, negotiated on the frontiers of France for an alliance against England, and but seldom laid down his head on his pillow at night without a prospect of being summoned thence to the scaffold or the field. The Government that could drive such a man into such resistance—and there were hundreds equal to him in goodness, if not in heroism, so driven,—is convicted by this very result alone, without any further inquiry into its history.

Though his lordship had not, at this time, nor indeed for a year or two after, connected himself with the United Irish Association any further than

by a common feeling in the cause, yet that the Government had seen reason, even thus early, to suspect him of being implicated in the conspiracy appears from a passage in the Report of the Secret Committee in 1799, where, among the persons who, it is stated, had, so early as the year 1794, rendered themselves obnoxious to such a suspicion, the name of his lordship is included.

Besides the well-known republican cast of his opinions, and the complexion of the society he chiefly lived with, there was also a circumstance that no doubt came to the knowledge of those in authority which may have had no small share in inducing this suspicion. At the beginning of 1793, soon after the declaration of war against England, the ruling party in France had despatched an agent to Ireland, for the purpose of sounding and conferring with the chief leaders of the United Irishmen, and offering the aid of French arms for the liberation of their country. This emissary was the bearer of a letter of introduction to Lord Edward, who, however, appears to have done nothing more towards the object of his mission than to make himself known to Mr Simon Butler, Mr Bond, and a few others of the

party, by whom his proposal was, after all, so little countenanced that he returned, without effecting any thing towards his purpose, to France.

Very different was the feeling with which a proposal of the same kind was hailed, after an increased pressure of coercion had been for some time in operation upon the people, and in proportion to the sullen tranquillity thus enforced over the surface of the public mind was the condensed purpose of revenge and ripeness for explosion underneath. Nor was there a want, even then, of forewarning voices to prognosticate the consequences of such a state of affairs; and Sir Lawrence Parsons, among others, in urging upon ministers the necessity of being at least prepared for the event, told them, with awful truth, that they "were sleeping on a volcano." The person employed in this communication from France was the Reverend William Jackson, whose arrest soon after his arrival, while it put a stop to the immediate course of his mission, served its object in a way hardly less important, by giving publicity to the purpose of his visit, and, for the first time, acquainting the people of Ireland, from any authentic source, that the eyes of France were upon them, and that the same powerful arm which was now, with restored strength and success, breaking asunder the chains of other lands, might, before long, reach theirs.

It does not appear that Lord Edward was among the per-

sons whom Jackson, previous to his apprehension, conferred with; nor does Theobald Wolfe Tone, who has given a detailed account of the whole transaction, and was himself deeply implicated in it, make any mention of his lordship's name. Even apart, however, from this negative evidence, we are fully warranted in concluding that he who, to the last, as is well known, regarded French assistance with apprehension and jealousy, must have been among the slowest and most reluctant to sanction the first recurrence to it. His views, indeed, at the outset, did not extend so far as total separation from England. Connected as he was by blood with that country, and counting, as it proved, far too confidently on the present dispositions of the English towards change and reform, he looked, at first, rather to concert with them in the great cause of freedom, than to anything like schism, and would, at the commencement of the struggle, have been contented with such a result as should leave the liberties of both countries regenerated and secured under one common head. This moderation of purpose, however, gradually gave way, as the hopes by which alone it could be sustained vanished. The rejection of the motions of Mr Grattan and Mr Ponsonby for reform had shut out all expectation of redress from the Irish Government; while the tameness with which England, in her horror of Jacobinism, was, at this moment, crouching

under the iron rule of Mr Pitt, gave as little hope of a better order of things dawning from that quarter.

In the meantime, the United Irish Society of Dublin, whose meetings hitherto had been held openly, were, under the sanction of one of the new coercive measures, dispersed as illegal ; and the whole body, thus debarred from the right of speaking out as citizens, passed naturally to the next step, of plotting as conspirators. Even yet, however, it does not appear that the last desperate expedient of recurring to force or to foreign aid, though urged eagerly by some, and long floating before the eyes of all, had entered seriously into the contemplation of those who were afterwards the chief leaders of the struggle ; nor can there, indeed, be any stronger proof of the reluctance with which these persons suffered themselves to be driven to such extremities than the known fact that, at the commencement of the year 1796, neither M'Nevin, nor Emmet, nor Arthur O'Connor, nor Lord Edward Fitzgerald, had yet joined the ranks of the United Irishmen.

Having traced thus far, as compendiously as our subject would admit of, the course of that rash and headlong current of events which marks this whole period of Irish history, we shall now confine ourselves as much as possible to those public occurrences more immediately connected with Lord Edward himself, and with the part taken by him in that deep-

laid and formidable conspiracy with which, about the period we have now reached, he, for the first time, connected himself ;—a conspiracy which, however judgments may vary as to the justifiableness of its grounds or aims, can admit, I think, but of one opinion with respect to the sagacious daring with which it was planned, and the perseverance, fidelity, and all but success, with which it was conducted.

From any great insight into the details of his private life we are henceforth shut out ; as, from the moment he found himself embarked in so perilous an enterprise, he, as a matter of conscience, abstained from much communication with his family, feeling it to be quite a sufficient infliction to keep them in alarm for his safety, without also drawing upon them suspicions that might endanger their own. After his arrival from England, he, for a short time, lived in some degree of style, keeping a fine stud of horses, and, as I have been told, displaying the first specimen of that sort of carriage, called a curricle, which had yet appeared in Dublin. On his removal, however, to the little Lodge at Kildare, he reduced his establishment considerably ; and small as was his income—never, I believe, exceeding eight hundred a year—it would have been, for a person of his retired habits and temperate wants, amply sufficient. But the engrossing object that now engaged him—to which safety, peace of mind and, at last, life was sacrificed—

absorbed likewise all his means ; the advances he found it necessary to make for the exigencies of the cause not only drawing upon his present resources, but also forcing him to raise supplies by loans with which his property was left encumbered.

It was about this time that there took place, on the Curragh of Kildare, a well-known rencontre between his lordship and some dragoon officers, which—like most other well-known anecdotes that the biographer has to inquire into—receives from every new relater a wholly different form. The following, however, are, as nearly as possible, the real circumstances of the transaction. Mr Arthur O'Connor being at that time on a visit to his noble friend, they rode together, on one of the days of the races, to the Curragh—Lord Edward having a green silk handkerchief round his neck. It was indeed his practice, at all times (contrary to the usual custom of that day) to wear a coloured silk neckcloth—generally of that pattern which now bears the name of Belcher ; but, on the present occasion, he chose to wear the national, and at that time obnoxious colour, green.

At the end of the race, having left the stand-house, in a canter, to return home, the two friends had not proceeded far before they found themselves overtaken by a party of from ten to a dozen officers, who, riding past them in full gallop, wheeled round, so as to obstruct their passage, and demanded that Lord Edward

should take off his green cravat. Thus accosted, his lordship answered coolly,—“ Your cloth would speak you to be gentlemen ; but this conduct conveys a very different impression. As to this neckcloth that so offends you, all I can say is,—here I stand ; let any man among you, who dares, come forward and take it off.” This speech, pronounced calmly and deliberately, took his pursuers by surprise ; and for a moment they looked puzzled at each other, doubtful how to proceed ; when Mr O'Connor, interposing, said, that if the officers chose to appoint two out of their number, Lord Edward and himself would be found, ready to attend their summons, at Kildare. The parties then separated, and during the two following days, Lord Edward and his friend waited the expected message. But no further steps were taken by these military gentlemen, on whose conduct rather a significant verdict was passed at a Curragh ball, shortly after, when it was agreed by all the ladies in the room not to accept any of them as partners.

It would appear to have been about the beginning of 1796 that Lord Edward first entered into the Society of United Irishmen. That he went through the usual form of initiation by an oath is not, we think, probable ; for, as in the case of Mr Arthur O'Connor, they dispensed with this condition, it is to be concluded that the same tribute to the high honour and trustworthiness of their initiate would be

accorded also to Lord Edward.

Though there had been from time to time, since the breaking out of the war with France, attempts made by individuals who passed secretly between the two countries to bring about an understanding between the United Irishmen and the French Directory, it was not till early in the year 1796 that any regular negotiation was entered into for that purpose: and the person who then took upon himself the office—an office, unluckily, not new in diplomacy—of representing the grievances of Ireland at the court of England's enemy, was Theobald Wolfe Tone, the banished Secretary of the Catholic Committee, who had, early in the year, sailed from America to France on this mission.

In consequence of Tone's representations of the state of feeling in Ireland, confirmed and enforced by more recent intelligence, it was, in the spring of that same year, intimated to the persons then directing the Irish Union, that the French Government were disposed to assist them, by an invasion of Ireland, in their plan of casting off the English yoke and establishing a Republic. Having taken this proposal seriously into considera-

tion, the Irish Executive returned for answer that "they accepted the offer, on condition that the French would come as allies only, and consent to act under the direction of the new Government, as Rochambeau did in America;—that upon the same principle, the expenses of the expedition must be reimbursed, and the troops, while acting in Ireland, receive Irish pay." This answer was despatched to Paris by a special messenger, who returned with the Directory's full assent to the terms, and a promise that the proffered succours should be sent without delay.

A Bill, however, brought in this session—the memorable Insurrection Act—must, from the part Lord Edward took in its discussion, receive a passing notice. In opposing (February 2nd) one of the Resolutions on which the Bill was to be founded, his lordship declared it to be his opinion, that "nothing would tranquilize the country but the sincere endeavour of the Government to redress the grievances of the people. If that was done, the people would return to their allegiance:—if not, he feared that neither Resolutions nor Bills would be of any avail"

CHAPTER VII

IN order to settle all the details of their late agreement with France, and, in fact, enter into a formal treaty with the French Directory, it was thought of importance by the United Irishmen to send some agent, whose station and character should, in the eyes of their new allies, lend weight to his mission: and to Lord Edward Fitzgerald the no less delicate than daring task was assigned. It being thought desirable, too, that he should have the aid, in his negotiations, of the brilliant talents and popular name of Mr Arthur O'Connor, they requested likewise the services of that gentleman, who consented readily to act in concert with his friend.

About the latter end of May, accompanied only by his lady, who was then not far from the period of her confinement, Lord Edward set out from Dublin on his perilous embassy—passing a day or two in London on his way, and dining on one of those days, at the house of Lord —, where the company consisted of Mr Fox, Mr Sheridan, and several other distinguished Whigs—all persons who had been known to concur warmly in every step of the popular cause in Ireland, and to whom, if Lord Edward did not give some intimation of the object of his present journey, such an

effort of reserve and secrecy was, I must say, very unusual in his character. From London his lordship proceeded to Hamburg, and had already begun to treat with Rheynhart, the French agent at that place, when he was joined there by Mr O'Connor. Seeing reason, however, to have some doubts of the trustworthiness of this person, they discontinued their negotiation with him, and, leaving Lady Edward at Hamburg, proceeded together to Basle, where, through the medium of the agent, Barthelomeu, they opened their negotiation with the French Directory.

It was now known that General Hoche, the late conqueror and pacificator of La Vendée, was the officer appointed to take the command of the expedition to Ireland; and the great advantage of holding personal communication on the subject with an individual on whom the destinies of their country so much depended, was fully appreciated by both friends. After a month's stay at Basle, however, it was signified to them that to Mr. O'Connor alone would it be permitted to meet Hoche as a negotiator,—the French Government having objected to receive Lord Edward, "lest the idea should get abroad, from his being married

to Pamela, that his mission had some reference to the Orleans family." Independently of this curious objection, it appears to have been strongly impressed upon Lord Edward by some of his warmest friends that he should on no account suffer his zeal in the cause to induce him to pass the borders of the French territory.

Leaving to Mr O'Connor, therefore, the management of their treaty with Hoche, whom the French Directory had invested with full powers for the purpose, Lord Edward returned to Hamburg,—having, unluckily, for a travelling companion, during the greater part of the journey, a foreign lady who had been once the mistress of an old friend and official colleague of Mr Pitt, and who was still in the habit of corresponding with her former protector. Wholly ignorant of these circumstances, Lord Edward, with the habitual frankness of his nature, not only expressed freely his opinions on all political subjects, but afforded some clues, it is said, to the secret of his present journey, which his fellow-traveller was, of course, not slow in transmitting to her official friend.

After his interview with Mr O'Connor, Hoche hastened, with all privacy, to Paris, to inform the Directory of the result; and the zeal with which his own ambitious spirit had already taken up the cause being still more quickened by the representations of the state of Ireland he had just received, an increased earnestness and activity were soon visible in

every branch of the preparations for the expedition. It was at this time that the indefatigable Tone first saw the destined leader of that enterprise which had, for so long a time, been the subject of all his thoughts and dreams,—that Avatar to which he had so long looked for the liberation of his country, and which was now, as he thought, to be accomplished in the person of this Chief. The conversations that passed between them are detailed in Tone's Diary; and it is not unamusing to observe how diplomatically the young general managed to draw from Tone all that he knew or thought, concerning Lord Edward and Mr O'Connor, without, in the least degree, betraying his own recent negotiation with them. "Hoche then asked me (says Tone), 'did I know Arthur O'Connor?' I replied, 'I did, and that I entertained the highest opinion of his talents, principles, and patriotism.' He asked me, 'Did he not some time ago make an explosion in the Irish Parliament?' I replied, 'He made the ablest and honestest speech, to my mind, that ever was made in that House.' 'Well,' said he, 'will he join us?' I answered, 'I hoped, as he was *foncièrement Irlandais*, that he undoubtedly would.' Hoche then went on to say, 'There is a Lord in your country (I was a little surprised at this beginning, knowing, as I do, what stuff our Irish peers are made of),—he is son to a Duke; is he not a patriot?' I immediately re-

cognized my friend Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and gave Hoche a very good account of him."

Hoche had pledged himself that, in the course of the autumn, the expedition should sail; and, as far as the military part of the preparations were concerned, it appears that in the month of September all was ready. But, from various delays and difficulties, imposed chiefly by the Department of the Marine, it was not till the 15th of December that this noble armament sailed from Brest, consisting of 17 sail of the line, 13 frigates, and an equal number of transports, making in all 43 sail, and having on board an army of near 15,000 men.

It was the opinion of Napoleon, as recorded somewhere in his Conversations, that, had Hoche landed with this fine army in Ireland, he would have been successful; and, taking into account the utterly defenceless state of that country at the moment, as well as the certainty that an immense proportion of the population would have declared for the invaders, it is not too much to assert that such would, in all probability, have been the result. For six days, during which the shattered remains of their fleet lay tossing within sight of the Irish shore, not a single British ship of war made its appearance; and it was also asserted, without being met by any contradiction, in the House of Commons, that such was the unprotected state of the South, at that moment,

that, had but 5,000 men been landed at Bantry, Cork must have fallen.

But while, in all that depended upon the foresight and watchfulness of their enemy, free course was left to the invaders, both by sea and land, in every other point of view such a concurrence of adverse accidents, such a combination of all that is most thwarting in fortune and in the elements, no expedition, since the Armada, had ever been doomed to encounter. Not to mention the various difficulties that for near a month delayed their embarkation, during the whole of which time the wind blew direct for Ireland, on the very first night of their departure a seventy-four of the squadron struck upon the rocks and was lost; and at the same time, the frigate, *La Fraternité*, on board which, by an inexplicably absurd arrangement, were both the General-in-Chief of the Army and the Admiral, was separated from the rest of the squadron, and saw no more of them till their return to Brest. To the inauspiciousness of this commencement, every succeeding day added some new difficulty, till, at length, after having been no less than four times dispersed by fogs and foul weather, the remains of the armament found themselves off Bantry Bay, the object of their destination, reduced from 43 sail to 16, and with but 6,500 fighting men on board.

Even then had some more daring spirit presided over their movements, a landing with the

force that remained would have been hazarded, and, considering the unguarded state of the country at the moment, with every chance of success. Fortunately, however, for the rulers of Ireland, General Grouchy, who had succeeded Hoche in the command, hesitated at such a responsibility; and, after a day or two lost in idly cruising off the Bay, such a tremendous gale set in, right from shore, as rendered a landing impracticable, and again scattered them over the waters. Nothing was left, therefore, but to return, how they could, to France; and, of all this formidable armament, but four ships of the line, two frigates and one lugger, arrived together at Brest; while Hoche himself, who, in setting out, had counted so confidently on the success of the expedition, that one of his last acts had been to urge on the Directory the speedy outfit of a second, found himself obliged, after an equally fruitless visit to Bantry Bay, to make his way back to France, not having seen a single sail of his scattered fleet the whole time, and being at last indebted to a small chaloupe for putting him on shore, in the middle of the night, about a league from La Rochelle.

We have dwelt thus long on the circumstances connected with this first attempt at invasion, both on account of the share taken by Lord Edward in the negotiations which led to it, and because the hope of a reconciliation that then so fleetingly presented itself afforded a brief resting-place

whereon we might pause and contemplate the relative positions of the two parties engaged in the struggle. It was soon seen that all hopes of a change of policy in the Government, except from bad to worse, were utterly fallacious. Whether conciliatory measures might yet have averted the conflict must be a question of mere conjecture; but that the reverse system drove the country into rebellion, and nearly severed it from England, has become matter of history. In the train of the Insurrection Act and the Indemnity Bill, soon followed, as the natural course of such legislation, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, inquisitorial tribunals under the name of Secret Committees, and, lastly, Martial Law, with all its frightful accompaniments of free quarters, burnings, picketings to extort confession, and every other such infliction.

In the meantime, while these events were taking place, negotiations had been again opened between the Government of France and the Chiefs of the United Irishmen; and the latter, thinking it expedient for the purpose of more regular communication, to have a resident representative in Paris, despatched thither, in the spring of this year, Mr. E. J. Lewines, with powers to act as their accredited minister to the French Republic. This gentleman was also instructed to negotiate if possible a loan of half a million, or £300,000, with either France or Spain.

Somewhat later in the year

an agent was, it appears, sent over by the French Directory to collect information respecting the state of Ireland ; but being unable, for want of the necessary passports, to proceed any further than London, he wrote to request that some confidential member of the

Union should be sent thither to meet him, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald, as being most competent to give intelligence respecting the military preparation of the country, was the person despatched with that view.

CHAPTER VIII

TOWARDS the close of 1797 the fervour of the insurrectionary spirit had, in the great seat of its strength, the North, visibly abated; and to the enforcement of martial law throughout Ulster, during the summer, that party, whose panacea for the ills of Ireland had been, at all times, and under all circumstances, the bayonet, were anxious to attribute this change. But though the seizure, under General Lake's Proclamation, of so large a quantity of arms, must have a good deal weakened the means of the United Irish in that quarter, it is also evident that there were still arms enough in their possession to give them confidence in their own strength, as their first impulse was to rise and employ them against their despoilers. This desire, indeed, seems to have sprung up, in the very wake of Martial Law, throughout the whole province, and the objections and obstacles raised by most of the Dublin leaders,—from a conviction, as they themselves state, that, without French aid, such an attempt would be unavailing,—first caused that discordance of views between the Ulster and Leinster delegates, which continued from thenceforth to embarrass the counsels of the conspiracy, and, at last, contributed to its failure.

Notwithstanding the dissent, however, of their Dublin brethren, some of the more sanguine leaders of the North still persisted in their endeavours to force a general rising, and Lowry, Teeling, and others proceeded to Dublin to concert measures for that purpose. A plan of insurrection—in drawing up which, it is said, some Irish officers, who had been in the Austrian service, assisted—had already been agreed upon; and, what was far more important, some of the regiments then on duty in Dublin having received intimation of the intended design, a deputation of sergeants from the Clare, Kilkenny, and Kildare militias waited upon the Provincial Committee of Dublin with an offer to seize, in the name of the Union, the Royal Barrack and Castle, without requiring the aid or presence of a single citizen.

This proposal was immediately laid before the Executive; and Lord Edward most strenuously urged, as might be expected, their acceptance of it. But, after a long and anxious discussion, their decision was to decline the offer, as involving a risk which the present state of their preparations would not justify them, they thought, in encountering. The whole design was, therefore, abandoned,

and its chief instigators, Messrs. Lowry, Teeling, and Tennant—the first a member of the Executive Committee of Ulster—were forced to fly to Hamburg.

To popular ardour, when at its height, the postponement of action is a check seldom recovered from; and it is the opinion of those most conversant with the history of the conspiracy, that the Leinster leaders, by their want of enterprise and decision at this moment, let pass a crisis far more pregnant with chances of success than any ever presented to them. The people of the North who had been induced to curb their first impulse by an assurance of the speedy arrival of the French, when they now saw weeks pass away without any appearance of the promised succours, began naturally to abate in their zeal, and even to suspect they had been deceived. From having been taught thus to look for aid to others, they lost confidence in themselves; and an interval of grace being, at the same time, proclaimed by the Government, within which those who submitted and gave up their arms were to receive full pardon, the good effects of such rarely tried policy were manifested by the numbers that, in all parts of the North, hastened to avail themselves of it.

To these causes of the abatement of fervour among the Northerners must be added another, of a still deeper and more important kind, which began to come into operation about the middle of 1797, and,

from that time, continued not only to moderate their enthusiasm in the conspiracy, but materially influenced the character of the rebellion that followed;—and this was the growing apprehension, both upon political and religious grounds, with which the more scrupulous among the Presbyterian republicans regarded that alliance, which the organization of the Catholic counties was now admitting into their league. Already had there for some time existed among the lower orders of Catholics, associations known by the name of Defenders, half political, half predatory, to which the Chiefs of the Union had always looked as a sort of nursery for their own military force,—the hardy habits of these freebooters (for such they had now become), and their familiarity with the use of arms, appearing to offer the kind of material out of which good example and discipline might succeed in making soldiers.

In the North the United Irishmen and the Defenders, though concurring in fierce enmity to the State, had been kept wholly distinct bodies, as well by the difference of their religious tenets, as by the grounds, but too sufficient, which the latter had for considering all Presbyterians as foes. In most other parts of Ireland, however, the case was different. Wherever the bulk of the population were Catholics, the Defenders formed the chief portion of the United force;—or, rather, in such

places, the system of the Union degenerated into Defenderism, assuming that character which a people, lawless from having been themselves so long outlawed, might have been expected to give it. Hence those outrages and crimes which, perpetrated under the name of United Irishmen, brought disgrace upon the cause, and alarmed more especially its Presbyterian supporters, who, not without reason, shrank from the hazard of committing the interests of the cause of civil and religious liberty to such hands. Under this impression it was that the leading United Irishmen of the Counties of Down and Antrim were anxious to inculcate the notion that the Presbyterians could dispense with Catholic aid; and so much had the repugnance of the two sects to act in concert manifested itself, that at a meeting of Captains, on the 31st of July, at Downpatrick, strong fears were, we find, expressed "that the Dissenters and Catholics would become two separate parties.

But though this, and the other causes we have adverted to, had, at the commencement of the year 1798, a good deal checked the advance of the conspiracy in that region which had given it birth and strength, there were still immense numbers organized and armed throughout the North, who, under Protestant leaders—such as were, at this time, the great majority of the United Chiefs,—would have felt too confident in their own power of giving a direction to the revolu-

tion to have any fears from the predominance of their outnumbering allies. Whatever of physical strength, too, might have been lost to the Union in Ulster had been more than a hundred fold made up by the spread of the organization elsewhere; and from the returns made, in the month of February that year, to Lord Edward, as head of the Military Committee, it appeared that the force at that time, regimented and armed, throughout Ireland, amounted to little less than 300,000 men.

The object of the Military Committee, just mentioned, was to prepare a plan of co-operation with the invader, or of insurrection, if forced to it, before the invader came. The hope of succours from France, though so frequently frustrated, was still kept sanguinely alive, and to the arrival of an armament in April they, at the beginning of this year, looked with confidence;—the strongest assurances having been given by M. Talleyrand to their agent at Paris, that an expedition was in forwardness, and would be ready by that time.

On the 28th of February Lord Edward's friend, Mr. Arthur O'Connor was, together with Quigley, the Irish priest, and others, arrested on their way to France, at Margate; and a paper being found on Quigley, addressed to the French Directory, inviting earnestly a speedy invasion of England, the whole party were, on the 6th of March, committed to the Tower, on a

charge of High Treason. In consequence of this arrest the office of the *Press* newspaper—a journal which had been in the year 1797 established in Dublin, for the express purpose of forwarding the views of the Union, and of which Mr O'Connor had lately become the avowed editor—was by order of the Government searched, and all the materials and papers belonging to the establishment seized. “Among the persons,” says a ministerial newspaper of the day, “who were in the house where the *Press* was printed, were found Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Counsellor Sampson. Lord Edward seemed peculiarly affected by the visit of the magistrate, and interested himself much to comfort the woman of the house, who had been brought by mischievous delusions into embarrassment and trouble; and offered her and her family a residence in his own house, as some compensation.”

It being now clear that, with or without French aid, the struggle must soon come, Lord Edward and his colleagues urged on, with redoubled zeal, the preparations for the encounter. A Revolutionary Staff was formed, and an Adjutant-General appointed in each county to transmit returns to the Executive of the strength and state of their respective forces—to report the nature of the military positions in their neighbourhood, to watch the movements of the King's troops, and in short, as their Instructions (drawn up by Lord Edward himself) direct,

to attend to every point connected with the species of warfare they were about to wage.

In this formidable train were affairs now proceeding; nor would it be possible, perhaps, to find, in the whole compass of history—taking into account the stake, the odds, the peril, and the daring—another instance of a conspiracy assuming such an attitude. But a blow was about to fall upon them for which they were little prepared. Hazardous as had been the agency of the Chiefs, at every step, and numerous as were the persons necessarily acquainted with their proceedings, yet so well contrived for secrecy was the medium through which they acted, and by such fidelity had they been hitherto fenced round, that the Government could not reach them. How little sparing those in authority would have been of rewards, their prodigality to their present informer proved. But few or none had yet been tempted to betray; and, in addition to the characteristic fidelity of the Irish in such confederacies, the same hatred of the law which had made them traitors to the State kept them true to each other.

It is, indeed, not the least singular feature of this singular piece of history, that with a Government, strongly intrenched both in power and will, to crush its opponents, and not scrupulous as to the means, there should now have elapsed two whole years of all but open rebellion, under their very eyes, without their being able, either

by force or money, to obtain sufficient information to place a single one of the many chiefs of the confederacy in their power. Even now, so far from their vigilance being instrumental in the discovery, it was but to the mere accidental circumstance of a worthless member of the conspiracy being pressed for a sum of money to discharge some debts, that the Government was indebted for the treachery that, at once, laid the whole plot at their feet—delivered up to them at one seizure, almost all its leaders, and thus disorganizing, by rendering it headless, the entire body of the Union, was the means, it is not too much to say, of saving the country to Great Britain.

The name of this informer—a name in *one* country, at least, never to be forgotten—was Thomas Reynolds; and the information he gave that led to the arrests at Bond's, on the 12th of March, will be most clearly set before the reader in the following extracts from his evidence :—

“It was about the 25th February, 1798, that in travelling with Mr Cope to Castle-Jordan in order to obtain possession of some lands to which we were jointly entitled, I was induced by the persuasion of this gentleman, on whose friendship and honour I had the most implicit reliance, to disclose to him, in part, the extent of the conspiracy. I added that in order to enable Government to counteract it entirely, I would procure a man who could get to the

bottom of it, and detect the leaders. In consequence of this I did, in the name of a third person, communicate to Mr Cope for Government all I knew of the plans and views of the United Irishmen, and particularly the proceedings of the meeting at Bond's, of the 19th February, 1798, which I had got from Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and the intended (Provincial) meeting of the 12th of March, also at Bond's, which meeting was in consequence apprehended.

“In order to procure more certain knowledge of the intended meeting of the 12th of March, I applied to Bond, at whose house Daly had said it was to be held; and Bond referred me to John M'Cann as the man who was to regulate that part of the business, and to give any information that might be necessary about it. I accordingly applied to M'Cann, who said, that unless I brought up the returns from the County Committee at Kildare, I could not be admitted to the Provincial, neither could he give me any information thereof, till I showed him said returns. On communicating this to Mr. Cope, he advised me to go down to my county, which I accordingly did, on the Saturday week before the arrest of the meeting at Bond's. On the Sunday I went to Castledermott, where for the first time I met my officers, and settled returns of men and arms, &c., after which I called upon Daly at Kilcullen, who I knew was in possession of the returns, who wrote a copy of

them and gave it to me. On bringing this paper up to Dublin, I showed it to M'Cann, and asked him the time of the meeting of the Provincial; when he said that it was very odd there was not any increase in the returns since the last meeting, and that the delegates must be in town on the Sunday evening. M'Cann then promised that he would breakfast with me on Sunday, 11th March, 1798, at my house, No. 4 Cumberland Street, and tell me all particulars as to time and place of the Provincial Meeting. Accordingly, M'Cann did come on the next morning, Sunday, to breakfast; but no particular conversation took place, as Mrs Reynolds was present.

"After breakfast, M'Cann and I walked to the bottom of Church Street, when he told me that, at ten o'clock on Monday morning, I must be at Oliver Bond's, and desired me to be punctual, as particular business would be done. Not wishing to be at the meeting, as I knew it was to be arrested, I wrote a note to Bond, which I sent on Monday morning, stating that Mrs Reynolds was taken very ill; that I could not consequently bring my money at the hour appointed, and begged him to make an apology for me to M'Cann on that account."

The above information being laid by Mr Cope before Government, a warrant from the Secretary of State's office was placed in the hands of Mr Swan, a Magistrate for the County of Dublin, who, on the

morning of Monday, 12th of March, repaired to Mr Oliver Bond's house, attended by thirteen sergeants in coloured clothes, and by means of the password—"Where's M'Cann? Is Ivers from Carlow come?"—obtained ready admission to the meeting, and arrested all the persons there assembled. Among the chief leaders mentioned in the warrant, there were—besides Oliver Bond himself, who was one of the most respectable and opulent merchants in all Ireland—Dr M'Nevin, Emmet, and Sampson, both barristers of eminence, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald. Of the four last-named, none happened to be present at the meeting; but separate warrants being instantly issued against them, M'Nevin, Emmet, and Sampson, were at no very long intervals after apprehended, and Lord Edward alone contrived to elude pursuit.

We are informed that after the arrests of the 12th of March, neither Lord Edward's brother nor aunts were at all aware of what had become of him. Whether it had been his intention to attend the meeting at Bond's does not appear from the evidence, but that he was one of those whom the officers expected to find there was manifest. On the issuing of the separate warrant against him, they lost no time, as we see, in putting it into execution, and were actually in Leinster House, making their search, when, having hastened home, hearing of the arrests, he was on the point of entering it. His

faithful Tony, however, being on the look-out for him, he received notice of what was going on in time to escape. It is difficult, however fruitless such a feeling must be, not to mingle a little regret with the reflection that, had he happened, on this day, to have been one of the persons arrested at Bond's, not only might his own life, from the turn affairs afterwards took, have been spared, but much of the unavailing bloodshed that was now to follow have been prevented.

Another striking part of the fatality which seems to have marked his every step was, that he himself should have been the chief cause of the informer Reynolds's promotion to those posts of honour and trust in the confederacy which gave him ultimately so much the power of betraying it. His lordship had, it appears, taken an active part in some negotiation relative to a lease between Reynolds and the Duke of Leinster, and being deceived, in the course of this transaction, by an appearance of honesty and respectability in the man, was induced, in the unsuspectingness of his own nature, to place entire confidence in him. To what an extent he carried this reliance, the following extracts from Reynolds's depositions will show:—

"In the month of November, 1797, Lord Edward Fitzgerald called upon me, at my house in Park Street, and said that he came to request me to become a Colonel for

the Barony of Kilkea and Moon, in which Barony I had then purchased a place. I at first hesitated, but he used many arguments, and I at length agreed to accept the command.

"Lord Edward then said, 'That there was an honest man in the county of Kildare, Matthew Kennaa, who would call and speak to me about my election to be Colonel.' About the latter end of January, 1798, Matthew Kennaa came to me, and asked whether I would stand my election for Colonel, on which I told him that I would, as Lord Edward had been speaking to me about it. Kennaa then said that he knew his lordship had been speaking to me on the subject, and adding, that it was intended I should hold a civil as well as military employment, asked me which I should prefer, being a treasurer or a secretary. To this I answered, that I would rather be a treasurer.

"About the 24th of February I went down to the Black Rock with Cummings and M'Cann of Grafton Street to dine with Lord Edward, where I found Hugh Wilson. It was after dinner on that day that Lord Edward gave me the Resolutions and Returns of the National Committee, with copies of which I furnished Mr Cope for the Government.

"I expressed some doubts to Lord Edward, whether the United men could stand in battle before the King's troops, but he replied to me, 'That would not be altogether necessary, as assistance from France

was expected ; that then some of the United Men would certainly join in the French lines, and of course would soon become disciplined ; but as to the multitude, all they would have to do would be to harass the escorts of ammunition, cut off detachments and foraging parties, and, in fine, make the King's troops feel themselves in every respect in an enemy's country, while the actual battle would be left to the foreign troops.' "

The very day before the arrest of the meeting at Bond's, a conversation, which we find thus detailed by the informer himself, took place between him and his noble patron :— "About four o'clock, on Sunday the 11th of March, I called at Leinster House, upon Lord Edward Fitzgerald. I had a printed paper in my hand, which I had picked up somewhere, purporting to be directions or orders signed by a Counsellor to the Lawyers' Corps. These required them, in case of riot or alarm, to repair to Smithfield, and such as had not ball-cartridge were to get them at his house, and such as were going out of town and did not think their arms safe, were to deposit them with him ; and there was a little paper inside, which mentioned that their orders were to be kept secret. Lord Edward Fitzgerald, upon reading this paper, seemed greatly agitated : he said he thought Government intended to arrest him, and he wished he could get to France, to hasten the invasion, which he could do by his intimacy

with Talleyrand Perigord, one of the French ministers. He said he would not approve of a general invasion at first, but that the French had some fine fast sailing frigates, and that he would put on board them as many English and Irish officers as he could procure to come over from France, and as many men as were capable of drilling, and stores and ammunition of different kinds, and run them into some port in this country ; he said he thought Wexford might do : that it would be unsuspected, and if they succeeded they could establish a rallying point, until other help should come.

"Lord Edward, after this conversation, walked up and down the room in a very agitated manner : 'No,' said he, 'it is impossible, Government cannot be informed of it ; they never have been able to know where the Provincial meet.' Shortly after this, the servant came and asked was he ready for dinner. I went away ;— he wanted me to stay to dinner, but I would not "

In making his terms with the Government, it was one of the conditions insisted upon by Reynolds, that the channel through which the information came should remain for some time a secret ;—a stipulation in which his employers were no less interested than himself, as, by wearing still the mask of a friend, he could retain still the confidence of those he was betraying, and whatever victims his first aim had missed, might, from the same ambush, be made sure of afterwards. In

pursuance of this policy, we find him, as he himself admits, paying a friendly visit to Mrs Bond, two or three days after he had marked her husband for death; and even to Lord Edward, whose place of concealment, at this moment, was kept secret, as we have seen, from his own family, this man, under the trust reposed in him, found ready admittance; and, again abusing the frank confidence he had inspired, was enabled to return to his employers armed with fresh proofs, which, though unavailing, as it turned out, against the noble Edward himself, were reserved for the posthumous revenge of disinheriting his offspring. The following is Reynolds's own account of what passed on this occasion; and it would be a task worthy of a great painter, to consign to canvas his conception of what an interview between two such persons, under such circumstances, must have been;—doing justice at once to the ardour, the gallant bearing, the elevation above all guile and suspicion, that characterized one of the parties, and the cool purpose of deceit, yet consciousness of degradation, which, to any eye, perhaps, but his victim's, must have been visible through the plausibility of the other:—

“I saw Lord Edward Fitzgerald the Wednesday night after, in Aungier Street, at Dr Kennedy's, having been brought to his place of concealment there. I had little conversation with him at that time, but he desired me to come

to him the following evening, at the same place. I did so, and he brought me up stairs, and gave me a paper, which he desired me to deliver as an address from him to the County, desiring them not to mind what had passed, as it signified nothing; but to fill up the vacancies occasioned by the arrest at Bond's as soon as possible, as the time was at hand when they should be called into action, and they might rely on his being in his place on the day of need.

“He also told me, that he had in his hands £13 as Treasurer to the Barony of Offaly, and £32 as Treasurer to the County of Kildare, which two sums he would take care to have handed over to me. Lord Edward then went away from the house in disguise, under care of a gentleman whom I believe to have been a Mr Lawless, a surgeon.”

That Reynolds promptly gave information to his employers of the place and circumstances of this interview, there can hardly be any doubt; and that they should have let pass such an opportunity of seizing their noble prey, can only be accounted for either by his quick change of place, which baffled their pursuit, or more probably by that wish to afford him a chance of quitting the country, which, it is well known, *one*, at least, of the powerful members of the cabinet at this time entertained. The thought of abandoning, however, for a single moment, the post of peril assigned to him, had never once entered

into Lord Edward's dauntless mind. The very calamity that had just befallen the cause but bound a spirit like his more ardently to its service. To repair the breaches made in the organisation by these arrests—no less than three members of the Leinster Executive having been seized at Bond's—was now the first great object of his lordship and his friends ; and, with such promptitude was this effected, that, on the very evening of the arrests, three other persons were found to fill the vacant places. So anxious, indeed, were they to have it supposed by the people that this discovery had but little deranged their plans, that we

find, shortly after, one of the delegates, in his report to the Ulster meeting, assuring them confidently, that the Leinster Committee had recovered wholly from their shock, and that within four days after the arrests, the whole province had been again completely organized.

In order to calm, too, the minds of their followers, and prevent either the panic of some, or the premature violence of others, from having any injurious consequences, they drew up hand-bills, in styles suited to their various readers, and had them distributed among the initiated.

CHAPTER IX

WHILE putting in train all these measures for the retrieval of their affairs, another essential object with them was to procure, somewhere near Dublin, a place of concealment for their noble leader, till circumstances should require his presence in the capital. With this view Mr Lawless—the gentleman mentioned in Reynolds's evidence—applied to a friend of his, a widow lady, who occupied a retired house, on the banks of the canal, in the immediate neighbourhood of Dublin; and who, besides being known not to entertain sentiments unfriendly to the popular cause, was a person of that strong character of mind and generosity of spirit which alone can qualify women to be heroines in such exigencies. To her sympathy, Mr Lawless felt assured his appeal in behalf of his friend would not be in vain. Though knowing nothing more of Lord Edward than what fame brought to every ear, she consented, perilous as was such hospitality, to afford him the shelter of her roof; and it was to this lady's house that, on the night of the Thursday after the arrests at Bond's, he was conveyed, in disguise, by Mr Lawless—having contrived to see Lady Edward and his children before he went.

Her ladyship had, immediately on the disappearance of Lord Edward, removed from the Duke of Leinster's to a house in Denzel Street, taking with her an attached female servant, and her husband's favourite, Tony. The two latter believed—as did most people—that their master had fled to France, and it was therefore with no small surprise that the maid-servant saw, on going into her lady's room late in the evening, his lordship and Lady Edward sitting together by the light of the fire. The youngest child had, at his desire, been brought down out of its bed for him to see it, and both he and Lady Edward were, as the maid thought, in tears.

The name he went by, while at the house of the widow lady, was Jameson, and an old and faithful maid-servant of the family was the only person allowed to wait upon him. He had not, however, been more than two days in the house, when one of those slight accidents, which seem to defy all caution, made the secret known to the whole family. A pair of his boots having been left outside his door to be cleaned, the man-servant to whom they had been given for that purpose told his mistress afterwards that he knew "who

the gentleman up stairs was ;— but that she need not fear, for he would die to save him.” He then showed her Lord Edward’s name written, at full length, in one of the boots. Thinking it possible that, after such a discovery, her guest might deem it dangerous to remain, Mrs — mentioned the circumstance to him. But his fears were not easily awakened :—“ What a noble fellow ! ” he exclaimed, “ I should like to have some talk with him.” In the hope that it might be an incitement to the man’s fidelity, the lady told him his lordship’s wish ; but he answered, “ No,—I will not look at him—for, if they should take me up, I can then, you know, swear that I never saw him.”

Though Mr Lawless had requested shelter but for a few days for his friend, he continued to remain in this unsuspected retreat near a month ; and as it was feared that to one accustomed so much to exercise confinement might prove injurious, he used to walk out, most nights, along the banks of the canal, accompanied generally by a child, who became a great favourite of his, and whom it was his amusement sometimes to frighten by jumping into the boats that were half sunk in the reservoir or basin of the canal. So light-hearted, indeed, and imprudent was he at times, that Mrs——, who, during his absence on these walks, was kept in a constant state of anxiety and suspense, used often to hear him, at a

considerable distance, laughing with his young companion, and more than once went out to meet them, and try to impress upon him the necessity of more caution.

Another subject of merriment between him and his young playfellow arose from a large bed of orange lilies which grew at the bottom of the garden, and which they had conspired together to root up, some day, when Mrs — should be from home.

Among the kind and attaching qualities by which her noble guest was distinguished, none struck Mrs — more forcibly than the affectionate solicitude with which he never ceased to think of Lady Edward and his children ; and, in order to tranquilize his anxieties on this head, she herself went more than once to Denzel Street—taking every precaution, of course, against being watched or tracked,—to make enquiries about his family. She found Lady Edward, who always ran to embrace her as if they had been the oldest friends, full of gratitude for the attentions bestowed upon her husband ; and she also, in the course of these visits, saw the faithful Tony, who lamented to her that “ his unfortunate face prevented him from going to see his dear master.”

A short time before the arrests of the 12th of March, when the Government were already furnished with full proof against Lord Edward, Mr Ogilvie, who had been himself but too painfully aware

of the extent to which his young relative had committed himself in the conspiracy, hurried over to Dublin, for the purpose of making one more effort to impress upon him the fearfulness of his position, and endeavour to detach him from the confederacy. In an interview which he had, shortly after his arrival, with Lord Clare, that nobleman expressed himself with the most friendly warmth on the subject, saying, "For God's sake get this young man out of the country:—the ports shall be thrown open to you, and no hindrance whatever offered."

Lord Edward was, however, immovable: at the very time when Mr Ogilvie called upon him, there was a meeting of the chief conspirators in the house, and his lordship came out of the room where they were assembled to speak with him. In vain did his adviser try every means of argument and persuasion: though as alive as ever to the kindness of his old friend, the noble Chief could only answer, "It is now out of the question: I am too deeply pledged to these men to be able to withdraw with honour."

It is right to add, that as the plans of the plot became further unfolded, the alarm of the Government for their own existence superseded every other thought, and all considerations of mercy were lost in their fears. At the period, therefore, where we are now arrived, the search after his lordship, by the emissaries of authority, was pur-

sued with as much eagerness as political zeal, urged by fear and revenge, could inspire.

As it would have been difficult to find a retreat more suited to his purpose, he would, no doubt, have remained at Mrs ——'s some time longer, had not a circumstance which now occurred awakened some fears for his safety. During the absence one day of the lady of the house, the maid-servant came in alarm to tell him that she had just seen a guard of soldiers, with fixed bayonets, pass on the other side of the canal. "And I, too" said Lord Edward, "have observed, within these ten minutes, a man whom I know to be a police-officer, looking up earnestly at the house." The maid, whose terrors were naturally increased by the responsibility now thrown upon her, made him instantly put on a lady's night-dress and get into bed; then darkening the room, as for a person indisposed, she placed a table, with medicine bottles upon it, beside the bed. In this situation he remained for two hours—but neither policeman nor soldiers again made their appearance; and the scene served but as a subject of mirth for the evening's conversation. It excited, however, some fears;—even his own sense of security was disturbed by it, and his friends thought it most prudent that he should, for a time at least, remove to Dublin, where, in the house of a respectable feather merchant, named Murphy, in Thomas Street, he

was to be allowed to lie concealed for some days.

While the noble fugitive was thus evading their toils, the Government, whose apprehensions still increased, in proportion as fresh disclosures, every day, revealed to them the extent to which the foundations of their authority had been undermined, made the whole country at length participators of their panic by a Proclamation which appeared on the 30th of March, declaring the entire kingdom in a state of rebellion; and at the same time with this proclamation appeared an order signed by Sir Ralph Abercrombie, authorising the troops to act without waiting for the authority of a civil magistrate.

As this reviv of the famous order of Lord Carhampton, in 1797, gave full loose to all the licence of the soldiery, while by Indemnity Bills the magistracy were no less encouraged to pass the bounds of the law, those who know what an Orange magistrate was in those times of terror, and recollect Sir Ralph Abercrombie's own description of the army then under him, that "it was in a state of licentiousness that rendered it formidable to every one but the enemy," may be left to picture to themselves some of the horrors to which, between bench and camp, the people of Ireland were now systematically delivered up by their rulers. That it was done on system has been since avowed—the professed object being to goad the wretched multitude into revolt before

the arrival of a French force should render their outbreak more formidable; and with such over zeal and efficacy was this work of torture performed that, in the county of Wexford, where the United Irish system had but little extended itself, the effects of the floggings and burnings now introduced there by the loyalists was to convert it into one of the worst hotbeds of the rebellion that followed.

While such was the plan of the Government, upon Lord Edward and his friends, whose policy it was to prevent a premature rising, fell the far more difficult task of reining in the impatience of the maddened people, so as not, at the same time, to break their spirit or allow them to fancy themselves deceived. To effect this purpose, all the influence of the Executive was now directed—weakened, however, as that influence had, to a considerable extent become, as well from the necessary disappearance of Lord Edward himself from the scene, as from the far inferior intellects that had now joined him at the helm; Mr Lawless being the only man of real ability whom the late seizure of the other Chiefs had left remaining by his side. All was done, however, that under such circumstances could be effected, to sustain the hopes of the people; and, early in April, we find delegates despatched to the North and elsewhere, to spread the intelligence that all was in readiness in the French ports for invasion, and that about the middle of the month

it was expected the troops would be on board.

But while holding forth this expectation to their followers, the Chiefs themselves could not but be well aware that their chance of any effective assistance from France was now considerably diminished. At no time, indeed, among a purely military people like the French, could a species of warfare so much dependent upon naval tactics for its success have been expected to be very popular ; and the result of the two experiments, on a grand scale, against Ireland was not such as could tend to remove their indisposition to such enterprises. The gallant Hoche, who alone felt sanguinely on this subject, was now no more ; and the great man (*Buonaparte*) who was, at this time, beginning to direct the fortunes of France, looked with no favouring eye either upon the Irish or their cause.

We left Lord Edward on his way from Mrs ——'s to take refuge in the house of Mr Murphy, of Thomas Street, whither he was brought by his friend Lawless, wrapped up in a countryman's great coat, and, in order the more completely to disguise him, wearing a pig-tailed wig. Though his host had seen him frequently before, he was now, for the first time, made known to him as an acquaintance. During the fortnight his lordship passed with him at this period, he lived much the same sort of life as at Mrs ——'s, walking out often at night, along with his host, by the canal, and receiv-

ing the visits but of two or three persons, among whom were Major Plunket and another military gentleman, of the rank of Colonel, named Lumm. To this latter officer Lord Edward had despatched a note, immediately on his arrival, by Murphy, who returned, attended by Colonel Lumm, to Thomas Street, taking the precaution to walk before him all the way.

As it was now more than a month since he had seen any of his family, he could no longer restrain his impatience for an interview with them, but, insisting that Mr Murphy should dress him in woman's clothes, went, attended by his host, in that disguise, to Denzel Street. The surprise, however, had nearly proved fatal to Lady Edward. Some friend being with her at the moment, the servant came to say that there was a lady in the parlour waiting to see her ; and, on Lady Edward discovering who it was, and that he meant to remain till next night, her alarm at his danger, and her anxiety about his return, brought on a premature confinement, and her second daughter, Lucy, was then born.

From the house of Mr Murphy, his lordship, at the end of a fortnight, was removed to Mr Cormick's, another feather merchant, in the same street ; and between this and the residence of Mr Moore, but a few doors distant, contrived to pass his time safe from detection till about the first week in May. As the connections of Cormick and

Moore, both men of extensive trade, lay chiefly among that class of persons who were most likely to be implicated in the conspiracy, their houses were of course the resort of most of those individuals with whom it was of importance that Lord Edward should communicate upon the business he had in train—a convenience which, while it facilitated the plans of concert with his followers, at the same time endangered his safety, by putting in the power of so many more persons the secret of his concealment. It is, indeed, suspected by those best acquainted with his position at this period, that it was among the company he so rashly permitted to be collected around him at Cormick's and Moore's, that he met the person whose imprudence or treachery afterwards betrayed him. How unguardedly his life was placed at the mercy of every chance visitor will be seen by the following extracts from the evidence of a person of the name of Hughes, taken before a Committee of the Lords, in August, 1798.

"Deponent went to Dublin on the 20th of April, and remained there about nine days. He called on Samuel Neilson, and walked with him to Mr Cormick, a feather merchant in Thomas Street. He was introduced by Neilson to Cormick, in the office. Cormick asked them to go up stairs; he and Neilson went up stairs, and found Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Mr Lawless, the surgeon, playing at billiards. He had been introduced to

Lord Edward, about a year before, by Teeling; he was a stranger to Lawless; stayed about an hour; no particular conversations; was invited to dine there that day, and did so; the company were, Lord Edward, Lawless, Neilson, Cormick, and his wife. The conversation turned upon the state of the country, and the violent measures of Government, in letting the army loose. The company were all of opinion, that there was then no chance of the people resisting by force with any success."

Notwithstanding the opinion here reported, it had, at this time, become manifest, both to Lord Edward himself and the greater number of those who acted with him, that the appeal to arms could not be much longer delayed, and that, there being now little hope of the promised aid from France, by Irish hands alone must the cause of Ireland be lost or won. Among those who had, from the first, insisted on the necessity of French aid, one or two still strongly deprecated any unassisted effort, and even withdrew from the meetings of the conspiracy, on learning that such a course was to be pursued. Well - intentioned, however, as were the views of these persons, Lord Edward could not but recollect, that to the prevalence of the same timid advisers, in the year 1797, was owing the loss of one of the most precious moments for action that fortune had ever presented to them—when their Union was still in full strength and heart, and treachery had

not yet found its way into their councils. Even granting, too, that to refrain from action would have been the true policy at this moment, such a course, in the present headlong temper of the people—goaded, as they were, by every torment that tyranny could devise—had become wholly impracticable. It was not for those, therefore, who had cheered them to the combat, to let them now plunge into it alone, nor, however desperate the prospect of success, to shrink from sharing the worst with them. Such, at least, were the generous views that determined Lord Edward to take his chance with his fellow-countrymen, and the event was not far from proving, that there was almost as much policy as generosity in his resolution.

That, at the same time, too, he was not unmindful of what these more prudent persons counselled, appears from a letter which, about the beginning of May, reached him at Cormick's, in answer to a request made, through the Irish agent at Paris, that a force not exceeding 5,000 men should be sent instantly to their succour. The communication of the agent, expressed in ambiguous phrase, was as follows: "I have just received a letter from L., who has made applications to the trustees for the advance of £5,000 upon your estates, which they refused, saying they would make no payment short of the entire, and that they would not be able to effect that for four months."

To wait the performance of this promise—a delusory one, as events afterwards proved—was now considered impossible; no alternative being any longer left to the people but either to break out into revolt or throw themselves on the mercy of their tormentors. The goading system had done its work; discontent had been ripened into rage; and the half-hangings and the burnings, the picket and the scourge, had left little more to the leaders of the infuriated multitude than to direct that rage which their rulers had roused. To enter into details of the cruelties perpetrated at this period is beyond the scope of our work. But it may be sufficient to say, that if, out of the great mass of uneducated Catholics, by whom, disorganised and without leaders, the partial rebellion that broke out afterwards was sustained, there were some guilty of atrocities that have left a stain on the Irish name, they therein showed themselves but too apt learners of those lessons of cruelty which their own Government had, during the few months previous to the insurrection, taught them.

It seems to have been about the first week in May, that the resolution was finally taken to prepare for a general rising before the end of that month. Intelligence of the design was transmitted through all parts of the Union, and arrangements made with the Executives of the three other Provinces, so that the news of the risings of their respective districts should

reach Dublin on the same day the rebellion broke out there. Of such importance was it thought to prepare the South for this simultaneous movement, that the younger Sheares, who was now one of the most active members of the Leinster Executive, proceeded, early in May, to Cork, to lay the train for explosion in that quarter.

To the momentous object of gaining over the militias, among whom disaffection had already spread to a great extent, they now applied themselves with a degree of zeal, or rather of headstrong rashness, of which the trial of the unfortunate Sheares's discloses a striking example; and such a footing had they, at this

time, obtained in most of the regiments, that we find Lawless, early in May, holding a conference, on the subject of the rising, with a meeting of delegates from almost all the militias in Ireland. By the plan of operations for Leinster, where Lord Edward was to raise his standard, it was arranged that the forces of the three counties of Dublin, Wicklow, and Kildare should co-operate in an advance upon the capital, taking by surprise the camp at Lehaunstown, and the artillery at Chapelizod, and crowning their enterprise by the seizure of the Lord Lieutenant, and the other members of the Government, of Dublin.

CHAPTER X

As it was now known that the pursuit after Lord Edward was becoming every day more active and eager, his friends felt, at last, the necessity of having him removed to some fitter place of concealment ; and as none offered that seemed to combine so many advantages, both of security and comfort, as his former asylum at Mrs ——'s, to that lady's house he was again, at the beginning of May, conveyed. Being uncertain as to his coming on the evening first named, Mrs —— had gone to the house of a neighbour, having left word at home, that she should be sent for "if Miss Fitzgerald, from Athy, arrived." Though so fully prepared to expect him, yet such was her sense of the risk and responsibility she so heroically took upon herself, that when the servant came, between eleven and twelve at night, to say that "Miss Fitzgerald, from Athy, had arrived" so agitated was she by the announcement, that she actually fainted.

Lord Edward's conductors, Messrs. Cormick and Lawless, had themselves experienced some alarm on the way, having heard voices behind as they came along the canal from Thomas Street, which appeared to them like those of persons eagerly in pursuit. In

their anxiety they persuaded his lordship, who was, all the while, laughing at their fears, to lay himself down in a ditch, by the road-side, till these people (who, after all, proved to be only labourers returning home) should have passed by ; and the plight in which, after having been covered up to the chin in mud, he made his re-appearance among his old friends was to himself a source of much jest and amusement.

The guarded privacy in which, during his first visit here, he had lived, was now no longer observed by him, and scarcely a day elapsed without his having company—sometimes six or seven persons—to dine with him. Fearless as he was by nature, his familiarity, of late, with danger had rendered him still more reckless of it : the companions of his hours, at Cormick's and Moore's being now in the secret of their Chief's retreat, felt no less pride than pleasure in being numbered among his visitors ; and, though he himself was far too temperate to be what is called convivial, that excitement of spirits natural on the eve of any great enterprise led him to relish, no doubt, the society of those who were so soon to share his dangers. To his kind, watchful hostess, however, this unguarded mode of

living was a constant source of apprehension and disquiet ; nor did his friend Lawless fail earnestly to represent to him the great danger of admitting so many visitors—more especially, a visitor so inconsiderate as Neilson, who, well known as was his person, used to ride out frequently, in full daylight, to call upon him.

While matters were thus verging towards a crisis, another fatal bolt fell, and almost as unexpectedly as the former, among the conspirators. Through the means of an officer of the King's County Militia, named Armstrong, who, by passing himself off as a person of republican principles, gained the confidence of the two brothers, John and Henry Sheares, the Government had obtained an insight into the movements of the conspiracy, of which, quickened as was now their vigilance by their fears, they lost no time in vigorously availing themselves ; and, as a first step, a Proclamation was issued, offering a reward of £1,000 for the apprehension of Lord Edward Fitzgerald. How far this measure, and the ulterior ones it seemed to portend, had any share in hastening the moment of explosion does not appear ; but it was now announced by the Chiefs to their followers that on the night of the 23rd instant the general rising was to take place.

The awful fiat being thus sent forth, it was seen that, for the purpose of concerting measures with his colleagues, the presence of Lord Edward

himself would be necessary in the capital, during the week previous to the great event, and he was, accordingly, about the 13th, removed from — to Dublin, leaving his hostess under the impression that he went but to attend some of the ordinary meetings of the Union. In taking leave of her he spoke with his usual cheerfulness, saying that, as soon as these meetings were over, he would return ; nor, aware as were all then present of the perils of his position, was it possible for them, while looking at that bright, kindly countenance, to associate with it a single boding of the sad fate that was now so near him.

A night or two after leaving Mrs —'s, it appears that he rode, attended only by Neilson, to reconnoitre the line of advance, on the Kildare side, to Dublin—the route marked out on one of the papers found upon him when arrested—and it was on this occasion that he was, for some time, stopped and questioned by the patrol at Palmerston. Being well disguised, however, and representing himself to be a doctor on his way to a dying patient, his companion and he were suffered to proceed on their way.

It was thought advisable, as a means of baffling pursuit, that he should not remain more than a night or two in any one place, and, among other retreats contemplated for him, application had been made, near a week before, to his former host, Murphy, who consented willingly to receive him.

Immediately after, however, appeared the Proclamation offering a reward for his apprehension, which so much alarmed Murphy, who was a person not of very strong mind or nerves, that he repented of his offer, and would most gladly have retracted it, had he but known how to communicate with the persons to whom he had pledged himself.

On the 17th, Ascension Thursday, he had been led to expect his noble guest would be with him ; but, owing most probably to the circumstance I am about to mention, his lordship did not then make his appearance. On the very morning of that day, the active Town-Major, Sirr, had received information that a party of persons, supposed to be Lord Edward Fitzgerald's body-guard, would be on their way from Thomas Street to Usher's Island at a certain hour that night. Accordingly, taking with him a sufficient number of assistants for his purpose, and accompanied also by Messrs. Ryan and Emerson, Major Sirr proceeded, at the proper time, to the quarter pointed out, and there being two different ways (either Watling Street, or Dirty Lane) by which the expected party might come, divided his force so as to intercept them by either road.

A similar plan having happened to be adopted by Lord Edward's escort, there took place, in each of these two streets, a conflict between the parties ; and Major Sirr, who had almost alone to bear the brunt in his quarter, was near

losing his life. In defending himself with a sword which he had snatched from one of his assailants, he, lost his footing and fell ; and had not those with whom he was engaged been much more occupied with their noble charge than with him, he could hardly have escaped. But, their chief object being Lord Edward's safety, after snapping a pistol or two at Sirr, they hurried away. On rejoining his friends, in the other street, the Town-Major found that they had succeeded in capturing one of their opponents, and this prisoner, who represented himself as a manufacturer of muslin from Scotland, and whose skillfully assumed ignorance of Irish affairs induced them, a day or two after, to discharge him as innocent, proved to have been no other than the famous M'Cabe, Lord Edward's confidential agent, and one of the most active organizers in the whole confederacy.

Of the precise object or destination of this party, we have not been able to make out any thing certain ; but if, as is generally supposed, Lord Edward was at the time on his way to Moira House, it was for the purpose, no doubt, of once more seeing Lady Edward (to whom the noble-minded mistress of that mansion had, since his concealment, paid the most compassionate attention) before his final plunge into a struggle the issue of which must, even to himself, have been so doubtful.

On the following night he was brought from Moore's to

the house of Mr Murphy—Mrs Moore herself being his conductress. He had been suffering lately from cold and sore throat, and, as his host thought, looked much altered in his appearance since he had last seen him. An old maid-servant was the only person in the house besides themselves.

Next morning, as Mr Murphy was standing within his gateway, there came a woman from Moore's with a bundle, which, without saying a word, she put into his hands, and which, taking for granted that it was for Lord Edward, he carried up to his lordship. It was found to contain a coat, jacket and trousers of dark green, edged with red, together with a handsome military cap, of a conical form. At the sight of this uniform, which, for the first time, led him to suspect that a rising must be at hand, the fears of the already nervous host were redoubled; and, on being desired by Lord Edward to put it somewhere out of sight, he carried the bundle to a loft over one of his warehouses, and there hid it under some goat-skins, whose offensiveness, he thought, would be a security against search.

About the middle of the day, an occurrence took place, which from its appearing to have some connection with the pursuit after himself, excited a good deal of apprehension in his lordship's mind. A sergeant-major, with a party of soldiers, had been seen to pass up the street, and were, at the moment when Murphy ran to apprise his guest of it, halting

before Moore's door. This suspicious circumstance, indicating, as it seemed, some knowledge of his haunts, startled Lord Edward, and he expressed instantly a wish to be put in some place of secrecy; on which Murphy took him out on top of the house, and laying him down in one of the valleys formed between the roofs of his warehouses, left him there for some hours. During the excitement produced in the neighbourhood by the appearance of the soldiers, Lord Edward's officious friend, Neilson, was, in his usual flighty and inconsiderate manner, walking up and down the street, saying occasionally, as he passed, to Murphy, who was standing in his gateway—"Is he safe?"—"Look sharp."

While this anxious scene was passing in one quarter, treachery—and it is still unknown from what source—was at work in another. It must have been late in the day that information of his lordship's hiding place reached the Government, as Major Sirr did not receive his instructions on the subject till but a few minutes before he proceeded to execute them. Major Swan and Mr Ryan (the latter of whom volunteered his services, happened to be in his house at the moment; and he had but time to take a few soldiers, in plain clothes, along with him—purposing to send, on his arrival in Thomas Street, for the pickets of infantry and cavalry in that neighbourhood.

To return to poor Lord Edward: as soon as the alarm produced by the soldiers had

subsided, he ventured to leave his retreat, and resume his place in the back drawing-room—where, Mr Murphy having invited Neilson to join them, they soon after sat down to dinner. The cloth had not been many minutes removed, when Neilson, as if suddenly recollecting something, hurried out of the room and left the house, shortly after which, Mr. Murphy, seeing that his guest was not inclined to drink any wine, went down stairs. In a few minutes after, however, returning, he found that his lordship had, in the interim, gone up to his bed-room, and, on following him thither, saw him lying, without his coat, upon the bed. There had now elapsed, from the time of Neilson's departure, not more than ten minutes, and it is asserted that he had, in going out, left the hall door open.*

Mr Murphy had but just begun to ask his host whether he would like some tea, when, hearing a trampling on the stairs, he turned round, and saw Major Swan enter the room. Scarcely had this officer time to mention the object of his visit, when Lord Edward jumped up, as Murphy describes him, "like a tiger," from the bed, on seeing which, Swan fired a small pocket-pistol at him, but without effect; and

then, turning round short upon Murphy, from whom he seemed to apprehend an attack, thrust the pistol violently in his face, saying to a soldier, who just then entered, "Take that fellow away." Almost at the same instant, Lord Edward struck at Swan with a dagger, which, it now appeared, he had had in bed with him; and, immediately after, Ryan, armed only with a sword-cane, entered the room.

In the mean time, Major Sirr, who had stopped below to place the pickets round the house, hearing the report of Swan's pistol, hurried up to the landing, and from thence saw, within the room, Lord Edward struggling between Swan and Ryan, the latter down on the floor, weltering in his blood, and both clinging to their powerful adversary, who was now dragging them towards the door. Threatened, as he was, with a fate similar to that of his companions, Sirr had no alternative but to fire, and, aiming his pistol deliberately, he lodged the contents in Lord Edward's right arm, near the shoulder. The wound for a moment staggered him; but, as he again rallied, and was pushing towards the door, Major Sirr called up the soldiers; and so desperate were their captive's struggles, that

* From our mention of these particulars respecting Neilson, it cannot fail to have struck the reader, that some share of the suspicion of having betrayed Lord Edward attaches to this man. That his conduct was calculated to leave such an impression cannot be denied; but besides that the general character of his mind, bordering closely, as it did, on insanity, affords some solution of these incoherencies, the fact of his being afterwards left to share the fate of the other State Prisoners would seem of itself sufficient to absolve him from any such imputation.

they found it necessary to lay their firelocks across him, before he could be disarmed or bound so as to prevent further mischief.

It was during one of these instinctive efforts of courage that the opportunity was, as we understand, taken by a wretched drummer to give him a wound in the back of the neck, which, though slight, yet, from its position, contributed not a little to aggravate the uneasiness of his last hours. There are also instances mentioned of rudeness, both in language and conduct, which he had to suffer, while in this state, from some of the minor tools of government, and which, even of such men, it is painful and difficult to believe. But so it is,

“Curs snap at lions in the toils,
whose looks

Frightened them being free.”

It being understood that Doctor Adreen, a surgeon of much eminence, was in the neighbourhood, messengers were immediately despatched to fetch him, and his attention was called to the state of the three combatants. The wounds of Major Swan, though numerous, were found not to be severe; but Mr Ryan was in a situation that gave but little hope of recovery. When, on examining Lord Edward's wound, Adreen pronounced it not to be dangerous, his lordship calmly answered, “I'm sorry for it.”

From Thomas Street he was

conveyed, in a sedan chair, open at the top, to the Castle, where the papers found upon him—one of them containing the line of advance upon Dublin, from the county of Kildare,—were produced and verified. On hearing that he was at the Castle, the Lord Lieutenant sent his private secretary, Mr Watson, to assure him that orders had been given for every possible attention being shown to him, consistently with the security of his person as a State Prisoner.

By the gentleman who was the bearer of this message, the following particulars have been given—as honourable to himself as they cannot but be interesting to others—of the interview which, in consequence he had with the noble prisoner :

“I found Lord Edward leaning back on a couple of chairs, in the office of the Secretary in the War Department, his arm extended, and supported by the surgeon, who was dressing his wound. His countenance was pallid, but serene; and when I told him, in a low voice, not to be overheard, my commission from the Lord Lieutenant, and that I was going to break the intelligence of what had occurred to Lady Edward, asking him, with every assurance of my fidelity and secrecy, whether there was any confidential communication he wished to be made to her ladyship, or whether I could undertake any other personal act of kindness in his service—he answered merely, but collectedly, ‘No, no—thank you

— nothing, nothing ; — only break it to her tenderly.’

“ When I called at Lady Edward’s house, this being in the evening, and after dark, I found that she was absent at a party at Moira House : I therefore communicated to two of her female attendants the events of the evening.”

The effect produced by this event is thus strikingly described by one of the historians of the Rebellion :—“ The arrest of Lord Edward visibly occasioned a strong sensation among the mass of the people in Dublin, as their hopes of getting possession of the metropolis, on the approaching insurrection which they meditated, rested much on his valour and skill as an officer. Numbers of them were seen going from one part of the town to the other, with a quick pace and a serious countenance. Others were perceived in small parties, conversing with that seriousness of look and energy of gesticulation, which strongly indicated the agitation of their minds. A rising to effect a rescue was expected that night ; the yeomen, therefore, and the garrison, which it was to be lamented was very thin, remained on their arms all night, and were so judiciously disposed as to prevent the possibility of an insurrection.”

The rebel uniform belonging to his lordship, which was found at Murphy’s, passed afterwards into the hands of Mr Watson Taylor, in whose possession it remained for some time, till the late Duke of York,

who had always been much attached to Lord Edward, and had even offered, when made Commander-in-Chief, to restore him to his rank in the army, having expressed a wish to possess so curious a relic of his noble friend, Mr Watson Taylor presented it to his Royal Highness, and what has become of it since the Duke’s death has not been ascertained.

The resolution, so harshly persevered in, not to suffer any of Lord Edward’s own friends to see him, is rendered still worse by the fact that, in some instances, the Government relaxed this rule of exclusion.

Even for the purpose of drawing up his will, which took place on the 27th of May, no person at all connected with his own family was allowed to have access to him ; and Mr John Leeson, who executed the instrument, sat in a carriage at the door of the prison, while Mr Stewart, the Government surgeon, communicated between him and the prisoner during the transaction. The following is the sketch of the will indited under such circumstances :—

“ I, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, do make this as my last Will and Testament, hereby revoking all others : that is to say, I leave all estates, of whatever sort, I may die possessed of, to my wife, Lady Pamela Fitzgerald, as a mark or my esteem, love, and confidence in her, for and during her natural life, and on her death to descend, share and

share alike, to my children or the survivors of them; she maintaining and educating the children according to her discretion; and I constitute her executrix of this my last Will and Testament: Signed, sealed and delivered, May the 26, 1798.

"In presence of"*

During this painful interval, the anxiety of Lord Edward's friends in England was no less intense and active. The letter from the late King George IV. will be found to afford an amiable instance of that sort of good nature which formed so atoning an ingredient in his character.

Seldom, indeed, were the kindlier feelings of George the Fourth more advantageously exhibited than on the subject of Lord Edward Fitzgerald—not only at the time of which we are speaking, when, on his first interview with the afflicted mother of his noble friend, he is said to have wept with all the tenderness of a woman in speaking of him, but at a much later period, when it was in his power, as monarch, to perform an act of humane justice towards Lord Edward's offspring, which, both as monarch and man, reflects the highest honour upon him.

Except as some comfort to the wounded hearts of his survivors, all this sympathy was now unavailing. A day or two before the Prince's and other letters, so creditable to

the feelings that dictated them, were written, the gallant spirit of him who was the object of all this tenderness had been released from its pains. Through the following memorandums, which are in Lord Henry's handwriting, may be traced more touchingly than in the most elaborate narrative the last stages of his suffering.

"Has he got fruit?—does he want linen?"

"How will the death of R. (Ryan) affect him?"

"What informers are supposed to be against him?"

"Upon his pain subsiding, the hearing of Ryan's death (which he must have heard) caused a dreadful turn in his mind.

"Affected strongly on the 2nd of June—began to be ill about 3.—Clinch executed before the prison. He must have known of it—asked what the noise was.

"2nd of June, in the evening was in the greatest danger.

"Mr. Stone, the officer that attended him, removed the 2nd of June—could not learn who was next put about him.

"2nd of June, in the evening, a keeper from a mad-house put with him—but finding him better in the night, left him

"June 3rd, exhausted, but composed."

On the night of the 3rd of June, it having become manifest that the noble prisoner could not survive many hours, the hearts of those in authority

* The signatures to the Instrument itself were "Alex. Lindsey, Geo. Stewart, and Sam. Stone."

at length relented, and Lord Henry and Lady Louisa Conolly were permitted to take a last view of their dying relative, and to quote the words of the latter:—"At two o'clock this morning, our beloved Edward was at peace; and, as the tender and watchful mercy of God is ever over the afflicted, we have reason to suppose this dissolution took place at the moment that it was fittest it should do so."

"On Friday night, a very great lowness came on, that made those about him consider him much in danger. On Saturday, he seemed to have recovered the attack, but on that night was again attacked with spasms, that subsided again yesterday morning. But in the course of the day, Mrs Pakenham (from whom I had my constant accounts) thought it best to send an express for me. I came to town, and got leave to go, with my poor dear Henry, to see him.

"Thanks to the great God! our visit was timed to the moment that the wretched situation allowed of. His mind had been agitated for two days, and the feeling was enough gone, not to be overcome by the sight of his brother and me. We had the consolation of seeing and feeling that it was a pleasure to him. I first approached his bed: he looked at me, knew me, kissed me, and said (what will never depart from my ears), 'It is heaven to me to see you!' and, shortly after, turning to the other side of his

bed, he said, 'I can't see you.' I went round, and he soon after kissed my hand, and smiled at me, which I shall never forget, though I saw death in his dear face at the time. I then told him that Henry was come. He said nothing that marked surprise at his being in Ireland, but expressed joy at hearing it, and said, 'Where is he, dear fellow?'

"Henry then took my place, and the two dear brothers frequently embraced each other, to the melting of a heart of stone; and yet God enabled both Henry and myself to remain quite composed. As every one left the room, we told him we only were with him. He said, 'That is very pleasant.' However, he remained silent, and I then brought in the subject of Lady Edward, and told him that I had not left her until I saw her on board; and Henry told him of having met her on the road well. He said, 'And the children too?—she is a charming woman'; and then became silent again. That expression about Lady Edward proved to me, that his senses were much lulled, and that he did not feel his situation to be what it was; but, thank God! they were enough alive to receive pleasure from seeing his brother and me. Dear Henry, in particular, he looked at continually with an expression of pleasure.

"When we left him, we told him, that as he appeared inclined to sleep, we would wish him a good night, and return in

the morning. He said, 'Do, do'; but did not express any uneasiness at our leaving him. We accordingly tore ourselves away, and very shortly after Mr Garnet (the surgeon that attended him for the two days, upon the departure of Mr

Stone, the officer that had been constantly with him), sent me word that the last convulsions soon came on, and ended at two o'clock, so that we were within two hours and a half before the sad close to a life we prized so dearly."

CHAPTER XI

To the high testimonials from eminent men in his lordship's favour we cannot resist the gratification of adding a few words of our own; though conscious that the manner in which his frank, simple character has unfolded itself before the reader of the foregoing pages, renders any further comment on it almost wholly superfluous. Both of his mind and heart, indeed, simplicity may be said to have been the predominant feature, pervading all his tastes, habits of thinking, affections and pursuits; and it was in this simplicity, and the singleness of purpose resulting from it, that the main strength of his manly character lay. Talents far more brilliant would, for want of the same clearness and concentration, have afforded a far less efficient light. It is Lord Bacon who remarked that the minds of some men resemble those ill-arranged mansions in which there are numerous small chambers, but no one spacious room. With Lord Edward the very reverse was the case—his mind being, to the whole extent of its range, thrown open, without either partitions or turnings, and a direct singleness, as

well of power as of aim, being the actuating principle of his understanding and his will.

It is evident that even a moderate portion of talent thus earnestly and undividedly brought to bear, must be capable of effects far beyond the reach even of the most splendid genius, when tempted, as it is too often, by the versatility of its own powers, to deviate into mere display, and so to lose sight of the end in the variety and prodigality of the means.

Another quality of mind which, both in action and in the counsels connected with it, gave Lord Edward the advantage over men far beyond him in intellectual resources was that disinterested and devoted courage, which, rendering self a mere cipher in his calculations, took from peril all power to influence his resolves, and left him free to pursue the right and the just, unembarrassed by a single regard to the consequences. Never, indeed, was the noble *devise* of the ancient Worthies of France, "*Fais ce que je dois, advienne que pourra,*" more genuinely exemplified than in his chivalrous character.

How much of self-will there was mixed up in his disposition may be seen throughout the ordinary events of his life. "Make Ogilvie remember," he says in one of his letters, "how obstinate I am when once I take a resolution." But, in him, the tendency of this sort of character to settle into obstinacy was in a great degree counteracted, not only by the natural gentleness of his disposition, but by a spirit of candour which, as we have seen attested by his friend Emmet, rendered him easily convincible by those on whose good sense and good intentions he had reliance. The same candour and gentleness of nature—however singular such a mixture may appear—continued to mingle with and influence his feelings even throughout that part of his career when it must have been most difficult to keep them clear of intolerance and bitterness; nor, in warring fiercely against principles which he thought ruinous and odious, did he entertain towards the persons professing them any of that rancorous spirit which is so rarely separable from the excitement of such a strife. As one who acted by his side throughout that conflict says of him—"He was the most tolerant of men; he had no enmity of *persons*;" and the same authority adds, in all the warmth of friendly portraiture, "I never saw in him, I will not say a vice, but a defect."

But while thus a natural sweetness and generosity of

temper counteracted in him those defects of obstinacy and intolerance to which a degree of self-will such as he possessed almost always leads, the great efficacy also of this quality in giving decision to the character was no less manifested by the perseverance with which, through all the disappointments and reverses of his cause, he continued, as we have seen, not only to stand by it firmly himself, but what—despondingly as he must often have felt—was far more trying, to set an example of confidence in its ultimate success for the encouragement of others. There was, it is true, in these very failures and misfortunes a sufficient stimulus to a strong and generous mind, like his, to call forth all its energies. Of such spirits reverses are the true whetstones, and, as has been well remarked, "None can feel themselves equal to the execution of a great design who have not once witnessed, with firmness and equanimity, its failure."

We have seen, accordingly, how unshrinking was the patience, how unabated the cheerfulness with which he was able to persevere under the continued frustration of all his plans and wishes. The disappointment, time after time, of his hopes of foreign succour might, from the jealousy with which he regarded such aid, have been easily surmounted by him had he but found a readiness, on the part of his colleagues, to second him in an appeal to native strength. But,

while the elements baffled all his projects from without, irresolution and timid counsels robbed him of his chosen moment of action within ; till, at last—confirmatory of all his own warnings as to the danger of delay—came that treachery by which the whole conspiracy was virtually broken up, their designs all laid open, and himself left, a fugitive and a wanderer, to trust to the precarious fidelity of persons trembling for their own safety, and tempted by the successful perfidy of others—with hardly one of those colleagues remaining by his side on whose sagacity he could rely for help through his difficulties.

Still, as we have seen, he persevered not only firmly but cheerfully, conceiving his responsibility to the cause to be but increased by the defection or loss of its other defenders. After the appearance of the Proclamation against him, some of his friends, seeing the imminent peril of his position, had provided some trusty boatmen, (like those through whose means Hamilton Rowan had escaped), who undertook to convey him safely to the coast of France. But Lord Edward would not hear of it ;—his part was already taken. Submit-

ting with heroic good-humour to a series of stratagems, disguises, and escapes, far more formidable to a frank spirit like his than the most decided danger, he reserved himself calmly for the great struggle to which his life was pledged, and which he had now to encounter, weakened, but not dismayed.

While such were the stronger and, as they may be called, public features of his character, of the attaching nature of his social qualities there exist so many memorials and proofs, both in the records of his life, and still more convincingly, in those bursts of sympathy and sorrow which his last melancholy moments called forth, that to expatiate any further on the topic would be superfluous. As son, friend, lover, husband, father, he may be said to have combined all that most adorns and endears such ties. Limited as was his income, he could, at all times, find the means to be generous, the simplicity of his own habits enabling him to be liberal to others ;—"he avoided," says the friend already quoted, "every expense for himself ; for others his generosity was bounded only by the means to satisfy it." By his servants he



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was idolized ;—" there was not one of us (said an honest old groom of his) that would not gladly have laid down life for him." Poor Tony, of whose fate the reader must be desirous to know something, never held up his head after his noble master's death, and very soon followed him.

Besides that charm which the most perfect good-nature threw round all that he said, and did, he had likewise in his conversation a vein of natural pleasantry, which was the more amusing from its making no pretensions to amuse, and which, from his great power of self-possession, he was able to preserve in situations where few people could afford to be playful. Of this we have a characteristic instance in what Lady Sarah Napier mentions him to have said, on an occasion of no less danger to himself than the arrest of his friend Mr O'Connor, at Maidstone—" He had nothing *odd* with him but 1200 guineas."

Among those traits of character which adorned him as a member of social life, there is one which, on every account, is far too important not to be brought prominently forward in any professed picture of him, and this was the strong and pure sense which he entertained of religion. So much is it the custom of those who would bring discredit upon freedom of thought in politics, to represent it as connected invariably with lax opinions upon religion, that it is of no small importance to be able to refer

to two such instances as Lord Edward Fitzgerald and the younger Emmet, in both of whom the freest range of what are called revolutionary principles was combined with a warm and steady belief in the doctrines of Christianity.

Thus far the task of rendering justice to the fine qualities of this noble person has been safe and easy—the voice of political enemies, no less than of friends, concurring cordially in the tribute. In coming to consider, however, some of the uses to which these high qualities were applied by him, and more particularly the great object to which, in the latter years of his life, he devoted all their energies, a far different tone of temper and opinion is to be counted on ; nor are we, even yet, perhaps, at a sufficient distance from the vortex of that struggle to have either the courage or the impartiality requisite towards judging fairly of the actors in it.

By such a view in an unfavourable light the system against which Lord Edward raised the standard of revolt, the question as to the justifiableness of his resistance will not be found difficult of decision ; nor even among those who, while acknowledging the extent of the evil, yet shrink from the desperate nature of the remedy, will there be found many who, on comparing the manifold enormities of the aggressor with the long forbore vengeance of the wronged, can feel a doubt as to *which* of the two parties the blame of that

alternative must rest with, or hesitate to pronounce, as Mr Grattan did deliberately in his place in the Irish House of Commons—"I think now, as I thought then (1798), that the treason of the Minister against the liberties of the people was infinitely worse than the rebellion of the people against the Minister."

There are persons, it is true, the bias of whose thoughts and feelings renders them incapable of considering the noble subject of these pages in any other light than that of a rebel against legitimate authority, and, as such, politically excluded from the circle of their sympathies. But not so does the feeling of mankind in general requite the generous

martyrs of their common cause. Even where contemporaries have been unjust, Time, the great vindicator of those who struggle for the Right, seldom fails to enforce a due atonement to their memories; and, while on those who so long resisted the just claims of the Irish people lies the blame of whatever excesses they were ultimately driven to, the concession, late, but effectual, of those measures of Emancipation and Reform which it was the first object of Lord Edward and his brave associates to obtain, has set a seal upon the general justice of their cause which no power of courts or courtiers can ever do away.

It is plain, however, that, strong as may be the inherent

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justice of any cause, without some clear and rationally grounded probability of success, an appeal to arms in its behalf can, by no means, be justified :—the very interests of the great principle which is at issue demanding, as a moral duty, from its defenders that they should not rashly expose themselves to the disgrace of failure, nor, by any burst of weak violence, provoke a retaliation which may only add to the fetters it is their purpose to break. With this sort of miscalculation,—adversely as all that depended upon chance turned out for them,—the leaders of the Irish Rebellion are, by no means, to be charged. It was truly said by Lord Halifax that “there is more strength in union than in numbers”; and the United Irishmen, in combining both these sources of strength, secured to themselves two of the surest elements of success. When, in addition to this, too, we take into account the expected aid from France, the many embarrassments in which England was involved at that crisis, the disaffection of the Irish militias, and the unprepared state of defence of the entire country, it will be confessed not to have been over sanguine in the Chiefs of the Union to calculate upon a preponderance of chances in their favour.

Even the rebellion that followed, mutilated as it was of native strength, and unassisted from without, yet presented so formidable a front as to

incline Sir John Moore to the opinion that, had a French force, at the same time, shown itself on the coast, the most serious, if not fatal, consequences must have ensued. As it was, the cost to the Government of no less than 20,000 lives in putting down what was but a partial movement of the Union—the North, its headquarters, having scarcely stirred—leaves awful room for conjecture as to what *might* have been the result, had the whole organized mass, under its first leaders, been set in motion.

Another point connected with, and in some instances included in the question of resistance is that of the allowableness or expediency of calling in foreign aid—a resource, the peril of which to national independence, in all cases, limits the occasion where it can be at all justifiably employed to a very few. Where the will of a majority of the people is declared in favour of a change, such aid will, of course, be unnecessary. It is, therefore, in the very nature of things, the sort of expedient most likely to be resorted to by a small and desperate minority, or sometimes even by individuals, who, as in the case of Count Julian, the betrayer of Spain to the Moors, or Mac Murchad, who first invited the English into Ireland, have been able, in one reckless movement of revenge, to fix the yoke of the stranger on their country's neck for ages.

That Lord Edward was well

aware of the peril to which even the purchased aid of France might expose his country's independence has been shown sufficiently in the course of these pages. Soon after his junction with the United Irishmen, a friend of his, who approved perfectly of their objects, but had a strong objection to the intention of calling in foreign aid, having expressed his opinions to this effect, Lord Edward answered that, without such aid, it would be impossible for them to accomplish their purpose.

"This, then, only proves," replied his friend, "that the country is not yet ripe for the design, and that you are premature in your movements."

For the excesses, and, in more than one instance, cold-blooded cruelties, by which the rebellion that followed Lord Edward's arrest was disgraced, neither he nor any of those leaders who first directed its movements, and the spirit of whose views and counsels had departed with themselves, are to be considered at all responsible. In reference to a Proclamation, of a sanguinary character, found upon one of the Sheares's, Mr Emmet declared, in his examination before the Lords, that he entirely "disapproved of it; that the old Executive had never meant to spill blood, but rather to retain men of a certain rank as hostages, and if they found them hostile to the Revolutionary Government to send them out of the country."

At the time of the search

after Lord Edward, on the 12th of March, there was found in his writing-box, at Leinster House, a paper, which is generally supposed to have been the production of his own pen, and with the insertion of which, therefore, we shall conclude.

"If ever any unfortunate cause should put our city, with the other parts of the country, into the possession of a cruel and tyrannical enemy, whose government might, by repeated oppressions, drive us into the last stage of desperate resistance, our conduct then should be regulated in a manner best calculated for obtaining victory.

"The following thoughts are humbly offered for the inspection of every real Irishman.

"In such a case every man ought to consider how that army could be attacked or repelled, and what advantage their discipline and numbers might give them in a populous city, acting in concert with the adjoining counties.

"It is well known that an officer of any skill in his profession would be very cautious of bringing the best disciplined troops into a large city in a state of insurrection, for the following reasons:—

"His troops, by the breadth of the streets, are obliged to have a very narrow front, and however numerous, only three men deep can be brought into action, which in the widest of our streets cannot be more than sixty men; as a space must be left on each side or flank, for

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the men who discharge to retreat to the rear, that their places may be occupied by the next in succession, who are loaded ; so, though there are a thousand men in a street, not more than sixty can act at one time ; and should they be attacked by an irregular body armed with pikes or such bold weapons, if the sixty men in front were defeated, the whole body, however numerous, are unable to assist, and immediately become a small mob in uniform, from the inferiority of their number in comparison to the people, and easily disposed of.

“ Another inconvenience might destroy the order of this army. Perhaps at the same moment, they may be dreadfully galled from the house tops by showers of bricks, coping stones, &c., which may be at hand,—without imitating the women of Paris, who carried the stones of the unpaved streets to the windows and tops of the houses in their aprons.

“ Another disadvantage on the part of the soldiers would be, that as they are regulated by the word of command, or stroke of the drum, they must

be left to their individual discretion, as such communications must be drowned in the noise and clamour of a popular tumult.

“ In the next place, that part of the populace who could not get into the engagement would be employed in unpaving the streets, so as to impede the movements of horse or artillery ; and in the avenues where the army was likely to pass, numbers would be engaged forming barriers of hogsheads, carts, cars, counters, doors, &c., the forcing of which barriers by the army would be disputed, while like ones were forming at every twenty or thirty yards, or any convenient distances the situation might require ; should such precautions be well observed, the progress of an army through one street or over one bridge would be very tedious, and attended with great loss, if it would not be destroyed. At the same time the neighbouring counties might rise in a mass and dispose of the troops scattered in their vicinity, and prevent a junction or a passage of any army intended for the city ; they would tear up the roads and barricade every con-

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venient distance with trees, timber, implements of husbandry, &c., at the same time lining the hedges, walls, ditches, and houses, with men armed with muskets, who would keep up a well-directed fire.

"However well exercised standing armies are supposed to be, by frequent reviews, and sham battles, they are never prepared for broken roads, or enclosed fields, in a country like ours covered with innumerable and continued intersections of ditches and hedges, every one of which is an advantage to an irregular body, and may with advantage be disputed against an army, as so many fortifications and intrenchments.

"The people in the city would have an advantage by being armed with pikes or such weapons. The first attack if possible should be made by men whose pikes were nine or ten feet long; by that means they could act in ranks deeper than the soldiery, whose arms are much shorter; then the deep files of the pike men, by being weightier, must easily break the thin order of the army.

"The charge of pike men

should be made in a smart trot. On the flank or extremity of every rank, there should be intrepid men placed to keep the fronts even, that, at closing, every point should tell together. They should have at the same time two or three like bodies at convenient distances in the rear, who would be brought up, if wanting, to support the front, which would give confidence to their brothers in action, as it would tend to discourage the enemy. At the same time there should be in the rear of each division some men of spirit to keep the ranks as close as possible.

"The apparent strength of the army should not intimidate, as closing on it makes its powder and ball useless: all its superiority is in fighting at a distance; all its skill ceases, and all its action must be suspended, when it once is within reach of the pike.

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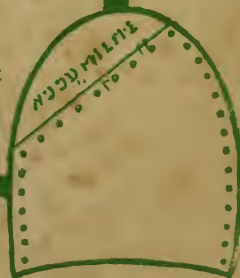
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